



THE TRAGEDY OF RIFFEL BERG—AND AFTER.
"HOLD ON! HOLD ON! WE ARE LOST!"



*Being
Travellers'
Tales
of
Strange Perils.*

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I. THE TRAGEDY OF RIFFEL BERG—AND
AFTER.

"**T**HE Lyskamm," said a dark, military-looking man, who sat opposite to me in the Anchor smoke-room one night, "is three hundred feet lower than Monte Rosa, it is true, but for dangerous, exciting climbing it has no equal in the Alps—at least, that's my opinion."

"You have climbed it, then?" interrogated an artist, who looked up from a paper as he spoke, and whose glance involuntarily fell on the other's left coat sleeve, which was empty. Colonel Playdell nodded assent; then, catching sight of the expectant expression on the artist's face, he continued:

"Yes, ten years ago; I climbed it within a few hours after the tragedy of Riffel Berg. Would you care to hear my experiences?"

Herbert Wilson, the artist, warmly acquiesced, as did those of us who had been discussing with the Colonel, previously, the merits and demerits of Alpine mountaineering.

The Anchor, or, to give the quaint little inn its full title, the Blue Anchor Hotel, is situated in a part of one of the home counties known to most London pedestrians and cyclists. Its front, spacious and airy rooms look out upon a tributary of the Thames, side by side with which runs the high road, the latter rising steeply from the bottom of a hill where the Anchor hangs out its creaking signboard. Looking

across the river valley, one sees the thickly-wooded hill bearing its curious title of the Hog's Back.

Entering the smoke-room of the Anchor whenever so disposed, one may be sure to find a fair gathering of artists and travellers, not to mention cyclists, who are the host's most cherished guests.

"I had joined a party with which for several weeks I enjoyed all the exhilarating influence of Alpine climbing, sharing, time after time, in the many hairbreadth escapes which we had," the Colonel went on, "and early one afternoon in September had reached the auberge, known as Seiler's Inn. There we intended to remain until the early morning, when we were to set out in the moonlight and make our way to where the Grenz and Gorner glaciers meet.

"That very afternoon the guide, who was the leading one of the three whom we had engaged, came to the inn and, with a white, scared face, told us of a catastrophe in which four guides and several French tourists had perished. Our party consisted of two women, sisters, in addition to the men, both of whom had been for a year members of an Alpine club. The object which the chief guide had in view was to persuade us to abandon our intention of climbing the Lyskamm, and the details of the disaster, which he poured into our ears, convinced all but one of our party that the ascent, owing to the early movement of the snow, would be impossible—the one who disagreed with Jean, the guide, was myself.



THE SMOKE-ROOM OF THE ANCHOR.

"The fact was I had set my heart on climbing the Lyskamm, and nothing could shake me from my purpose. I went to the entrance of the inn and stood there, talking to the guide.

" 'Only a madman would attempt it,' he rejoined, shaking his head negatively to my arguments. 'Just think of it, sir, there are seven dead who will rest in the churchyard of Zermatt to-morrow. Everything seemed perfectly safe, and François was one of the best guides in Europe! No mortal hand could have saved them when the avalanche swept down upon them: we've dug them out of the snow; it flung the whole party sheer down into a crevasse! Besides, you've two women with you; I wouldn't undertake to guide your party to the Lyskamm now, not for twice what you've offered. There!' he said, pointing away south of the Riffel Berg; 'they're carrying them down to Zermatt.' I saw the guides, with their still burdens, winding down the mountain path—but I was as determined as ever that, come what would, I meant to climb the Lyskamm.

"Failing to persuade Jean, I turned my attention to the other two guides, and, by dint of promising them double pay, I carried my point. They were to be at Seiler's Inn ready to start at one o'clock, or soon after. I made my way back to the others, and put my purpose before them; every-

one tried to persuade me to give the mad scheme up, but I held to my purpose.

"I was gathering some eidelweiss that same evening, before my proposed ascent of the mountain, when I saw one of the ladies of the party approaching. It was Eileen, the elder of the two sisters, a tall, fair girl of twenty, with cheeks aglow with health—the gift of the mountain air.

" 'You will give up that foolish idea of yours of climbing the Lyskamm,' she said, with a smile which was half an entreaty, as she took the proffered flowers from my hand.

" 'Not at all, Miss Bryante,' I answered. 'Jean, the guide, is frightened because of the tragedy of Riffel Berg to-day. He ought to know that such accidents are the exception and not the rule. It is certainly very unlikely that two disasters will happen here within twenty-four hours.'

" 'It is the unlikely that frequently does happen,' she said, nervously playing with the eidelweiss in her hands. 'Surely the guides know more about their own mountains than we do?'

" 'Jean is frightened,' I repeated. 'To-morrow he will regret that he lost the opportunity to add a few pounds to his year's earnings.'

"Eileen laid her hand impetuously upon my arm. 'Jean told me himself that the snow is hanging over like a great fringe up

there. Don't attempt the ascent, I implore you—for all our sakes,' she protested.

"I saw her lips quiver as she spoke. My resolution I knew would melt into thin air if I stood there another minute, and I turned to go down the path.

"I ought to be grateful to you—to you all,' I added, 'for the interest you take in my welfare. Only for one reason I must make the attempt—a man should keep to his word.'

"Eileen glanced at me coldly as she said: 'Oh, of course, whatever else may happen, your word to carry out this insane feat must on no account be broken—better anything than that!' and she walked abruptly away. I went slowly down the mountain path, feeling considerably perturbed at the probable consequences of my obstinacy. However, I made my way to the hut of one of the promised guides, to arrange some details of the ascent, and then returned to the inn. There I kept myself apart from the rest of the inmates, and, as the night came on, impatiently awaited the coming hour.

"With the exception of myself, no one was stirring, when at last the appointed time arrived. I closed the door of the inn quietly, and then stood there in the moonlight wondering at the delay of the guides. The minutes wore on slowly, but no signs of the men were apparent. It was nearly two o'clock in the morning when, having

awaited the guides' coming for almost an hour, I took my alpenstock and made my way to the hut below.

"I rapped violently upon the rough-timbered door, which, after a few minutes' interval, was flung open by the guide whom I had been expecting.

"'Come!' I said irritably, 'it is nearly two o'clock. You promised to be at the inn by one. Where is your companion?'

"He shaded his eyes from the light of the candle, which he held close to his face, then answered:

"'I don't intend to climb the Lyskamm this morning!'

"'What do you mean?' I asked. 'Didn't you arrange to guide me there? weren't we to start at one o'clock, and haven't we lost an hour nearly? I gave you the price you asked; what more do you want?'

"The guide left me for a minute, then returned, holding out the gold pieces I had given him.

"'There, take your money, I want none of it. I've three children asleep in the hut; they're too young to be left orphans.'

"I swept the coins from his hand so that they rolled down into his hut.

"'There's something more in this than you choose to tell me,' I said. 'If you're too cowardly to come, very well, don't. I'll make you a present of the coins there for the finding, if you will tell me why you changed your mind and left me to wait for your coming in vain.'

"The guide hesitated a minute or two. 'You will give me your word not to mention it?' he asked deferentially at last.

"'Certainly,' I answered. 'Come, we are losing time!'

"'I've been paid twice the sum not to act as your guide.'

"'Who paid it?' I asked angrily. 'Are my fellow companions treating me as a child?'

"'I'd rather not tell you,' he replied.

"'I solemnly promise you that not a word of what you say shall pass my lips.'

"'You remember coming here during the evening?' he questioned.

I nodded assent.

"'An hour afterwards there came some one—alone—who paid me the money.'



"I WAS GATHERING SOME EIDELWEISS."

"‘Man or woman?’ I asked laconically.

"‘A lady, tall and fair.’

"I hardly knew what to say, for anger and joy struggled within me for the mastery. If my safety was of such moment to Eileen—for I recognised that she it was who had bribed the guide—surely the question which I had been longing to ask her would not be uttered in vain! Still, I must climb the Lyskamm. I changed the drift of the conversation by asking the guide:

"‘If you are determined not to conduct me yourself, can you tell me where I am likely to find a guide?’

"‘There’s Michel; he has another guide with him; the two had engaged to take someone staying at the Seiler’s Inn, but that accident at Riffel Berg has prevented it. The party refused to go.’

"I cheered up instantly at the good news.

"‘You will show me the hut?’ I asked. For reply he thrust on a close-fitting cap, threw a heavy comforter about his neck as a protection against the biting air, and then set off by my side.

"It was three o’clock in the morning when, accompanied by two guides, Michel Volden and Stephen Perin, I reached the Gorner Glacier, and thence made for the Grentz Glacier, which had to be scaled. The guide had spoken the truth as to the danger from the snow, as I soon discovered.

"Up the solid, slanting wall of ice we went, Michel swinging his ice-axe and cutting every step for our feet. Half-an-hour or more had passed when the wind, which had throughout the ascent blown piercingly cold, suddenly increased and grew so strong that several times we had to lie down at full length on the glacier, and, clinging with hands and feet to the ice, wait for the driving gusts to pass.

"Once the wind caught us unawares, and the leading guide slipped; had it not been for the rope, Michel’s fate would have been sealed, for right behind us was a huge crevasse, or jagged fissure in the ice.

"Still we went on in the teeth of the wind that was now howling furiously about us. Suddenly a cry came from Michel.

"‘Hold on! Hold on! We are lost!’

"Through the shrieking of the wind I



"‘MAN OR WOMAN?’ I ASKED LACONICALLY."

heard a tremendous roar, as with a grinding, dull thud, down upon us came an enormous mass of snow.

"I had just time to thrust my feet into the footholds and to cling with half-frozen fingers to the rope, as Stephen, the guide behind—for we were in single file—cried hoarsely:

"‘An avalanche! The Lord save us!’

"In an instant the mass of snow struck us, and down the side of the glacier we fell, half buried in the blinding snow and dazed with the roar and crashing of everything about us.

"By good chance we managed to stop our descent before we reached the crevasse. Like Stephen, I was little hurt, except for some severe scratches and bruises. Michel was unconscious; and it was some time before we managed to arouse him. We chafed his hands and feet and rubbed him with snow; then, at last, when he was able to move, seeing the uselessness of attempting to proceed, I proposed to return. To this neither of the guides, to my complete astonishment, would agree.

"‘We can’t have another fall,’ volunteered Michel; ‘besides, it’s safer above than below that snow;’ and he pointed to where it lay far beneath us in great drifts,

and seemed about to crash down the mountain slopes.

"Very well," I assented, relieved by his words; for I had bitterly blamed my proverbial obstinacy in attempting to climb the Lyskamm that morning; 'only remember this, that I am ready to go back at once, or whenever you think it unsafe to proceed farther.'

"We will go on," answered Michel, as his axe flashed in the light of the sun just rising. 'It's my belief the wind is dying away.'

"We advanced higher on our way, higher and higher yet.

"There ought to be a crevasse about here," Michel muttered to himself; and, even as he spoke, we caught sight of it. Stephen, who carried the short scaling ladder, thrust it forward and held one end of it as well as he could with his numbed fingers. Michel crawled across it, when, suddenly, the ladder slipped from the other guide's hands, and, borne by Michel's weight, fell down the crevasse, the unhappy guide being flung headlong over the precipice of ice! I tried to save him as he fell, with a fearful cry, into the void, and, overbalancing myself, went down, down into that awful abyss, clutching at the empty air as I tried to stop myself.

"The avalanche which we had encountered saved my life, for, after falling over twenty feet, I struck against a huge projecting piece of ice, upon which the snow lay heavily piled. I could neither move nor cry out, my strength seemed completely gone, and, from the pain of my left arm, I conjectured it was broken.

"There I lay, supported in mid air on a fragment of ice which in a second might

crash down to the far depths below—where, indeed, the body of Michel lay, disfigured beyond recognition! I saw Stephen stretch himself over the side of the icy precipice, as he tried to discover if either of us still lived, or had managed to cling to any of the projecting scarps of ice. He caught sight of me lying half buried in the snow, and made his way down the mountain to seek for help, as I subsequently learnt.

"Eileen Bryante, it seems, was awakened by the wind which shook the little inn, and threatened at times to break in its crazy casements. Remembering that I had intended to attempt to scale the Lyskamm, she recalled the circumstance of having bribed Pierre to give up the hazardous affair. Glancing through the window, she saw great masses of snow lying about and someone pushing through it, making his way along the narrow face of the steep ridge opposite. Quickly dressing, she passed down the stairway, and saw that the door of my room was wide open!

"Out she hastened, and recognised in the morning light the guide, Pierre, axe in hand and carrying a great coil of rope over his shoulder.

"Pierre!" she cried. The mountaineer caught the sound of her voice ringing in the icy air, and stood for a second watching her.

"She caught up to him, then asked: 'You kept your promise to me last night—no one left Seiler's Inn that you know of? I noticed one of the room doors open, and I thought—perhaps—that—'

"Eileen could say no more, for she saw a look on the guide's face that startled her.

"I didn't go, but the gentleman was obsti-



"THERE I LAY ON A FRAGMENT OF ICE."

nate. He got two other guides, and started later. I'm going to search for them. It looks as if they have had a rough time. There's no telling, of course; but the snow which has fallen here is only the fringe of what has fallen up there, it's my opinion.'

"She looked at the guide with a face from which every vestige of colour had fled.

"'You mean—that—there has been—an avalanche?' Eileen asked disjointedly.

"'I fear so,' he answered; then getting a view of the Gorner Grat, he cried suddenly:

"'Go back and tell them in the inn to scour the place for guides, rouse the land-



"EILEEN FOLLOWED HAND OVER HAND."

lord—why, the snow has come down as never man saw it before!

"Eileen never stirred from his side.

"'No;' she answered, her courage returning with the knowledge of the danger to be faced. 'It would take too long; if they want help, it must be given at once. By the time other guides are got together it will be too late.' She hastened on in front of the guide, who looked at her in undisguised dismay.

"'Come back!' he cried; 'there are enough dead, to my fancy, as it is. A woman can be of no use.'

"'Why?' she asked. 'I can climb; I am not afraid, and my footsteps are sure.'

"Pierre stared at Eileen for a moment as

if the situation was too much for him to discuss.

"'You English have queer ways,' he said at last. 'Come, if you like, but mind, I give you no assistance. You have no alpenstock, and you'll soon have to go back.' He caught up to her, and together they hurried on, side by side; when, however, he saw that she persisted in struggling up the slippery green glacier on their arrival there, he relented, and coiling the rope round his waist, passed the end to her, to which she fastened herself securely.

"Up the glacier they went; Pierre discovering the recent steps which Michel had made, and cutting them deeper as he climbed on.

"Half-an-hour after they had left the Auf der Platte behind, they heard someone shouting for assistance. It was Stephen, who was on his way to Riffel Berg, and had caught sight of them. He took Pierre aside and explained matters.

"'It must be attempted, at all events,' Eileen overheard Pierre remark at last; and then they continued the ascent, taking her between them, securely fastened to the rope. In order to avoid a threatening mass of snow, it became necessary to make a detour which brought them face to face with a new difficulty. A huge crevasse lay before them, and, being without a scaling ladder, Pierre took the rope with which they had fastened themselves and dexterously flung it, lassoing a great, irregular block of ice beyond. Securing one end on the side they stood, the guides prepared to cross the crevasse. Stephen went first, after whom Eileen followed, working her way forward, hand over hand, as she clung to the frail rope.

"Pierre, who followed last, succeeded in getting the rope free after passing over the crevasse; then up the almost perpendicular ice they struggled once more until the chasm was reached where I had lain for hours, thinking that rescue would never come.

"'There is one of the two lying below on a shelf of ice,' said Stephen to Eileen.

"'One! and where is the other?' she asked. The mountaineer shrugged his shoulders.

"'Lying countless feet beyond the other,' he replied: 'but come, we must do something for the living.'

"Eileen glanced down at the depths

below. 'Then one is dead—who is still alive there on the ice-ledge?'

"'I can't quite make out,' Stephen answered, who was busy knotting the rope round his waist; 'he, too, may be dead for aught we know.'

"'What are you going to do?' she asked shortly."

"'Pierre will lower me down there, and when I secure the man lying on the ice-ledge, you must do your best to help him to bring us to the top of the crevasse. I know of no other plan.'

"'You are stronger than I am,' Eileen said, a sudden inspiration flashing across her brain. 'You would be of much greater service to help Pierre.'

"'It's of no use discussing the difficulties,' Stephen rejoined. 'If the worst comes to the worst, those upon the rope will only meet with Michel's fate; there's naught else to do but try.'

"'I say there is; you and Pierre could easily draw whoever is upon the ice-ledge to the surface—and myself.'

"'You!' cried Stephen. 'Impossible!'

"'If it could be managed,' interposed Pierre, who rather favoured the idea, 'we should gain in two ways: there would be less strain on the rope, and we could together haul them up; besides, in case of accident.' And he whispered the rest into the other's ear.

"'I don't half like the idea,' said Stephen, as he slowly unfastened the rope from his own waist and proceeded to make a loop for Eileen to sit in.

"'Now, have a care,' added Pierre, as he gave his hatchet to Eileen. 'Use that to keep yourself from oscillating against the ice. Are you ready?'

"'Quite,' Eileen answered, grasping the axe. Out into the void the girl swung, with one hand grasping the rope and with the other thrusting the axe towards the jagged ice-wall to keep herself steady. Steadily, a foot at a time, the

mountaineers lowered her, calling out from time to time to know if all was going well, for as they stood with their heels fast thrust into the ice and their bodies thrown back, they could not see what was transpiring. At last Eileen reached the ledge on which I was lying, and, clearing away the snow in which I was half hidden, she caught a glimpse of my face.

"I glanced at her in utter astonishment, for, being unable to move from my side, owing to the position in which I had fallen, I could not see hitherto what effort was made for my rescue.

"'The cowards,' I muttered, as Eileen bent over me, 'to leave you to run such a risk. I am punished more than enough for my folly.'

"'Hush,' she whispered. 'This is no time for reproaches—it was my wish, not theirs.'

"I could do absolutely nothing towards my own rescue, my bruised limbs being rigid with the cold. Eileen wound the rope about me, then secured herself to it, and gave a jerk to indicate to those above that all was ready. Not a minute too soon was the signal given, for we had only been raised a foot or two when the ice ledge, on which we had been, split off and fell with a resounding crash below.

"The rope, stretched to its utmost, swayed ominously. Twice, in spite of Eileen's utmost caution, we were flung against the ice, which beat us back into the middle of the crevasse, and, glancing down at the abysmal depths below, I grew dizzy with the horror of our threatened fate, depending, as it did, on a single piece of rope no thicker than a man's finger. Before we had reached the top I became unconscious from the exhaustion. When I came to my senses Eileen and Pierre were bending over me, Stephen having gone down to Riffel Berg for assistance.



"STEADILY THE MOUNTAINEERS LOWERED HER."

"I was carried down to Seiler's Inn at last, where my injuries were attended to by a young doctor, whose party most fortunately had arrived there that day. My arm was fractured hopelessly, and you see the tokens of it," Colonel Playdell added, as he motioned to his empty sleeve when his story was concluded.

"And Michel, the guide?" I asked. "Was any attempt made to recover his body?"

"The mountaineers know by sad experience that such efforts are useless, the depth of the great crevasse

has never been discovered," the Colonel answered.

"But you said you had climbed the Lyskamm," said the artist, who had listened attentively throughout.

"I did not reach the top on that occasion, certainly," he rejoined; "but next year my wife—Eileen Bryante that was, you know—and I succeeded in getting there, and, strange to say, one of our guides, a strong, sturdy-looking fellow, was Michel Volden, the son of the very guide for whose fate I have so often reproached myself!"

Notable Men and their Work.

Lord Armstrong, C.B., and Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

By FREDERICK DOLMAN.

THE city on the Tyne has been remarkably prolific in great men. Stephenson, Collingwood, Eldon, Akenside and Bewick are names suggesting to the mind enduring eminence in the various spheres of science and art, literature, law and war. To this roll of its famous sons Newcastle, by common consent of its citizens, has long since added Armstrong, the man by whose name is known the immense engineering and ship-building works which are renowned throughout the civilized world. "Armstrong's" might well be the name of a town itself; covering more than a mile of the river front and an area of seventy acres, the works employ a population of from eight thousand—the number varies, of course, with the state of trade—to fifteen thousand men. Only a portion of the employés live at Elswick, however, most of them coming from all parts of Newcastle and its environs. Thus, owing to this circumstance alone, "Armstrong's" and its prosperity is a matter of constant concern to Newcastle as a whole.

Travellers by the East Coast Route to Scotland

often make inquiry, on passing over the High-level Bridge at Newcastle, as to the whereabouts of "Armstrong's." Elswick is situated, however, some distance higher up the river, quite beyond the view from the railway carriages. The works form a long range of high, single-storied buildings, with glass roofs, between the river on the one side and the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway on the other. Railway lines surround the works, and the waggons can be shunted right into the "shops." On the riverside there are three jetties, at which ships can load and unload with the help of monstrous cranes that will lift heavy ordnance into the holds of vessels, only one man standing by to give the necessary guidance.

The hydraulic shears at Elswick, which can lift one hundred and twenty tons, is one of the features of a trip up the river.

From the deck of the river steamer, "Armstrong's" forms a very impressive spectacle. The long line of buildings is surmounted by three tall chimneys, sending forth sparks and smoke from the three great furnaces, through

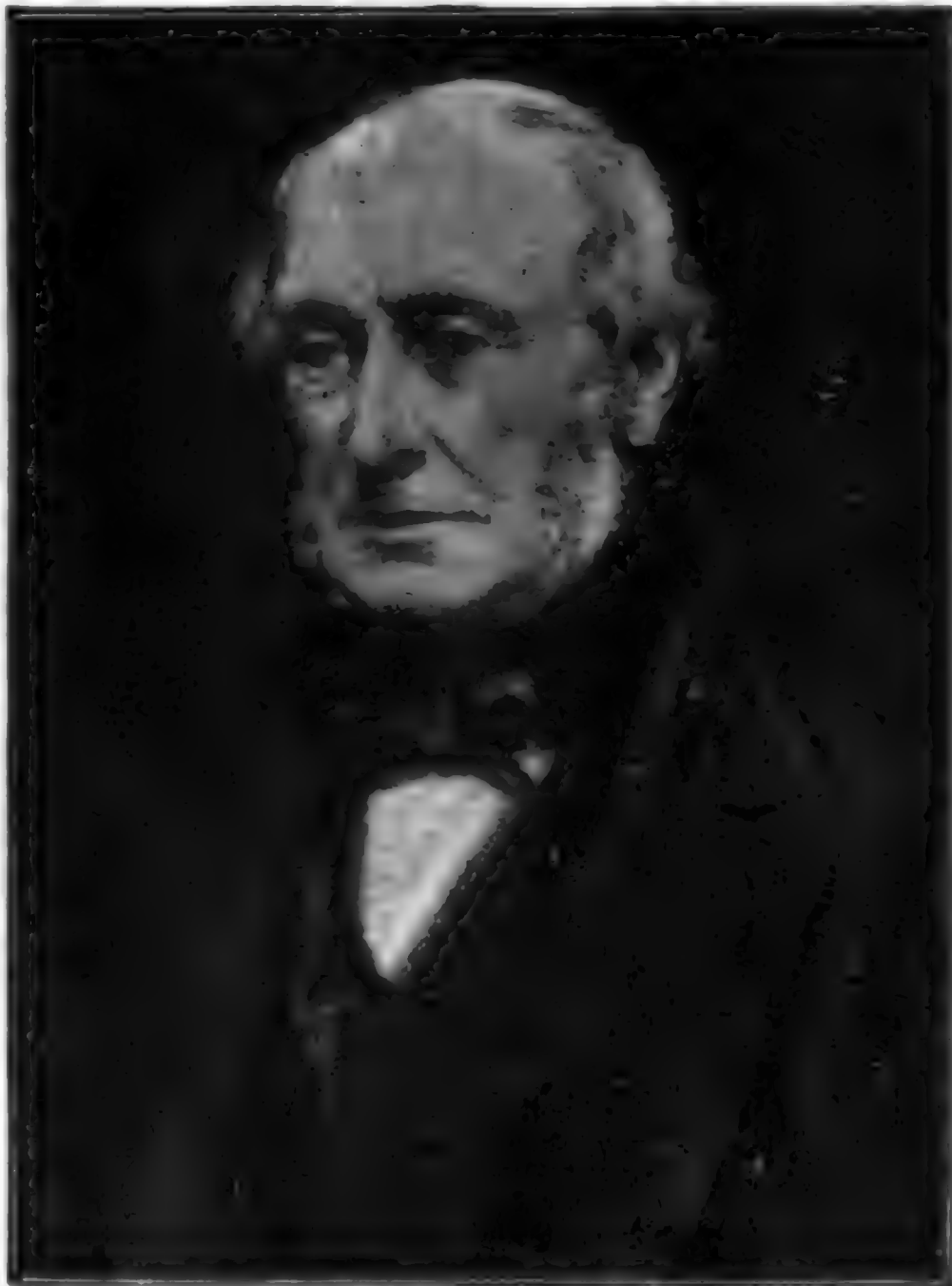


Photo. by]

LORD ARMSTRONG.

[J. Worsnop, Rothbur].



LORD ARMSTRONG'S RESIDENCE "CRAGSIDE," NEAR ROTHBURY.

which nearly one hundred thousand tons of iron can be passed in the course of a year. In the centre are the engineering shops, and it is from this centre that "Armstrong's" have expanded east and west since Lord Armstrong established the firm nearly fifty years ago. On the east are the ordnance works: on the west, the ship-building yards. Mitchell's great yard, which was amalgamated with "Armstrong's" when the firm became a limited company, is at Low Walker, five miles from Elswick, and that distance nearer the sea.

Since the conversion of the firm into a limited company, Lord Armstrong has spent but very little time at Elswick, visiting the works, in fact, only in order to attend an occasional meeting of the Board of Directors. In order, therefore, to become personally acquainted with the man whose life-work is seen in these great scenes of science and industry, I take train for Rothbury, a kind of overgrown

village in the most remote, and at the same time most picturesque, part of the county of Northumberland.

Cragside, Lord Armstrong's residence near Rothbury, Northumberland, has been described as "a romance in stone and mortar." The phrase happily describes one of the strongest impressions the visitor carries away from Cragside, but there is something more than "romance" about the solid, handsome structure, with its extensive, and, in some respects,



THE CORRIDOR, CRAGSIDE.

remarkable demes-
ne—or rather, above
and beyond the ro-
mance of colour and
form, there is the
romance of science,
of hard struggle
with nature, of
power and determi-
nation overcoming
seemingly insuper-
able difficulties.
Cragside, in one
sense, may be said
to exemplify the
whole career of its
venerable and dis-
tinguished owner.
For, unlike most
modern residences,
whether large or
small, Cragside
bears the best name
it could have been
given: it is literally
and truly built on



THE DRAWING-ROOM, CRAGSIDE.

the lower shelf of a crag which is probably
some three hundred feet in height, a crag
which, until it came under Lord Arm-
strong's beneficent sway, was, as is almost
invariably the case with these Northum-
brian heights, absolutely bare of foliage,
not a speck of bright colour redeeming
the cold grey of the massive rocks. The
crag is now a mass of verdure as far as
the eye can see, such patches of stone as
still remain uncovered only serving to
emphasize the wondrous change which
Lord Armstrong has wrought over an
area of something like fifteen thousand
acres. It is not surprising that, to the
natives of Rothbury, this transformation
in the aspect of nature should appear an
even greater achievement than the epoch-
making invention of hydraulic machinery
or the revolutionary improvement in
ordnance.

The grounds of Cragside are practically
unique in their way. Once inside the
entrance gate and past the pretty lodge,
aglow with flowers, and you find yourself
traversing—in place of the broad carriage
drive known to conventionality—narrow,
deviating paths, moss-grown and undula-
ting, now rising, then descending. The
stranger would assuredly lose his way
were not the mansion, with its Elizabethan
gables and turrets, always wholly or
partially in sight as the goal to be striven

for. At length I cross a rustic bridge
over a swiftly flowing little stream (a
“burn,” as the Northerners call it), which
brings me to a natural kind of staircase,
composed of large rocks, and, this
ascended, I find myself at the wide, oval
porch, which is the principal entry into
Lord Armstrong's home. A man-servant
conducts me through a hall and corridor,
bright and light, like the rest of the house,
with polished oak, to the drawing-room,
where, at the farther end, Lord Armstrong
is sitting at his desk, engaged with the
morning's correspondence. This apart-
ment, with its splendid length and breadth,
might well be called the picture gallery,
for it is here that Lord Armstrong's
greatest art treasures hang, in the pure,
clear light derived from a crystal roof.
As I advance up the room to take Lord
Armstrong's outstretched hand, my glance
discovers the presence of Sir John Millais's
“Jephtha” and even more famous “Chill
October,” one of Turner's seascapes,
O'Neil's “Death of Rafaëlle,” a cattle
picture by the veteran Sidney Cooper,
Rosa Bonheur's “Forest of Fontaine-
bleau,” and a characteristic water-colour
by Sir David Wilkie.

Greetings exchanged, I can conscien-
tiously congratulate Lord Armstrong on
his evident good health. Some time
before, his lordship had been confined to

his room for several days, as the result of a chill incurred through a visit to London, but his recuperative power is now clearly shown. In the resolute-looking eyes and the firm yet kindly face there is the bright light and glow of good health, and the tall, well-proportioned figure rises from the chair with something of the elasticity of youth.

"Why, at eighty-three you have the physique, Lord Armstrong," I almost involuntarily exclaimed, "of a Gladstone."

"No," Lord Armstrong, who wears a grey tweed suit and an old-fashioned stock round his neck, smilingly replies, "I hav'n't the wonderful energy of Mr. Gladstone. He is, indeed, a marvel. How well I remember my first meeting him. It was when Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor, and Mr. Sidney Herbert, who had been Secretary of War in the preceding administration, introduced me to him as 'the worst enemy a Chancellor of the Exchequer could have'—a jocular allusion, of course, to the costliness of the Armstrong guns.

"For my part, although I continue to have good health, I feel the need of rest. I am now nearly always here, only now and again going to Elswick to attend the Board meetings and just keep in touch with affairs at the works. When a man turns eighty I think he is entitled to repose."

"Especially after such a career as yours, my lord?"

"Yes; I have worked hard in my time. For the first fifteen years, after starting the works at Elswick, you know, I had a very hard struggle to make head-

way. During the whole of that time I never had a week's holiday, and many a night I stayed at Elswick all night, working on till ten or eleven when I had some important matter in hand, and then laying down on a couch for a few hours. But it is not hard work that kills—hard work never did anybody much harm; it is worry and anxiety that tell on one."

"But I expect there was plenty of that when you were in the midst of difficult and important experiments?"

"Yes. At times I suffered from the inventor's fever, I suppose, and got little sleep at night in consequence. But that would be only when I was at the crisis of important experiments. I have always lived regularly and temperately, however, and it is to this, rather than to physical strength and its development, that must be attributed my present health. In fact, as a child I was very weakly, and for months together had to be kept at home in Newcastle and carefully protected from the severity of the winter, and I dare say it was feared at one time that I should not reach manhood."

It was, it seems, during these long periods of confinement to the house that the boy showed the scientific mind which, in after years, was to give him world wide fame. He cared for toys only as they served to satisfy his curiosity regarding the way of things and in course of time, with very slender materials, he would create various mechanical contrivances. Always fond of fishing, his first invention — when quite a youth — was made in the baiting material, its object being the preservation of the minnows



THE STAIRCASE, CRAGSIDE.

at a proper temperature. One would have supposed that, with such clear manifestations of his talent, Lord Armstrong's vocation would have been from the outset pretty clearly marked out. Yet, when he was just leaving his teens, Lord Armstrong was put by his father, a well-to-do corn merchant and a much-esteemed citizen of Newcastle, who once filled the office of Mayor, into the profession of the law. I asked Lord

Armstrong how such a mistake could have been made.

"Well, the law was not, of course, of my choosing; my vocation was chosen for me, and for a good many years I stuck to the law, while all my leisure was given to mechanics. But the circumstances were peculiar. A great friend of my family's, Mr. Donkin, had a very prosperous attorney's business. He was childless. When I entered his office I was practically adopted by him; I was to be his heir. Such an opening in life was, of course, most attractive; here, it seemed, was a career ready made for me. As it turned out, of course, it meant the waste of some ten or eleven of the best years of my life—and yet not entire waste, perhaps, for my legal training and knowledge have been of help to me in many ways in business. And all the time, although I had no idea of abandoning the law and regularly attended to my professional duties, I was an amateur scientist, constantly experimenting and studying in my leisure time."

"It was quite an accident, was it not, which gave you the first idea of a hydraulic machine?"

"Yes; I trace the germ of the invention to a summer excursion in Deepdale. I was lounging idly about, watching an old water-mill, when it occurred to me what a small part of the power of the water was



THE LIBRARY, CRAGSIDE.

used in driving the wheel, and then I thought how great would be the force of even a small quantity of water if its energy were only concentrated in one column. When I returned to Newcastle I set to work at Watson's High Bridge Works, where I had been in the habit of making mechanical experiments, trying to practically realise the idea."

Everyone knows how, in the course of a comparatively short time, hydraulic machinery, founded on this simple principle, became an accomplished fact. But great as the invention was, its commercial value was not at first dazzling, it appears.

"When, at length," Lord Armstrong says, "I resolved, about 1847, to give up my profession and start in business as a mechanical engineer, most of my friends thought I was very foolish. And on the face of it, it was a bold thing to do—abandoning, for an entirely new enterprise, the large and old-established legal business, which, in the course of time, would become my own."

His partners, Mr. Alderman Donkin, Mr. Alderman Potter, Mr. Geo. Cruddas and Mr. Richard Lambert, were the friends who had joined him in erecting, on Newcastle Quay, the first hydraulic crane.

By this time, however, the commercial value of the hydraulic machine had been clearly demonstrated. The Corporation

of Newcastle were among the first to show their faith in the lawyer's invention by ordering three more hydraulic cranes for the quay, these being made under Lord Armstrong's direction at Watson's High Bridge Works. A visit paid to Newcastle by Mr. Jesse Hartley, the engineer at Liverpool Docks, was also an important factor in establishing its fame.

The new firm, which was to so rapidly reach enormous dimensions, started with another valuable invention in the shape of a hydro-electric machine, made by Lord Armstrong likewise, while still pursuing the avocation of a lawyer. He had had his attention diverted for some months from the subject of hydraulic power by a curious incident occurring in the Seaton Delaval Collieries. Two or three workmen avowed that while steam was blowing off the engine boiler, and they were adjusting the safety valve, sparks of fire shot out and touched their finger-tips. This incident set the mind of Armstrong at work, and, in a very short time, Messrs. Watson and Lambert had produced, under his direction, the first machine for the production of electricity by means of high-pressure steam.

I was curious to ascertain from Lord Armstrong whether he felt that there was injustice or unreasonableness in the incredulity with which his inventions were at the outset regarded, but I could find in his conversation no evidence of such feeling. In fact, it is his opinion that the inventor must have good proof of his success, an actual example of his theories which can be properly tested, before his discovery is of any value. "For this reason," Lord

Armstrong said in effect to me, "I attach no importance whatever to this talk about a new vessel which will cross the Atlantic in three days, or the new war material which in an instant will sweep armies off the field and fleets off the sea."

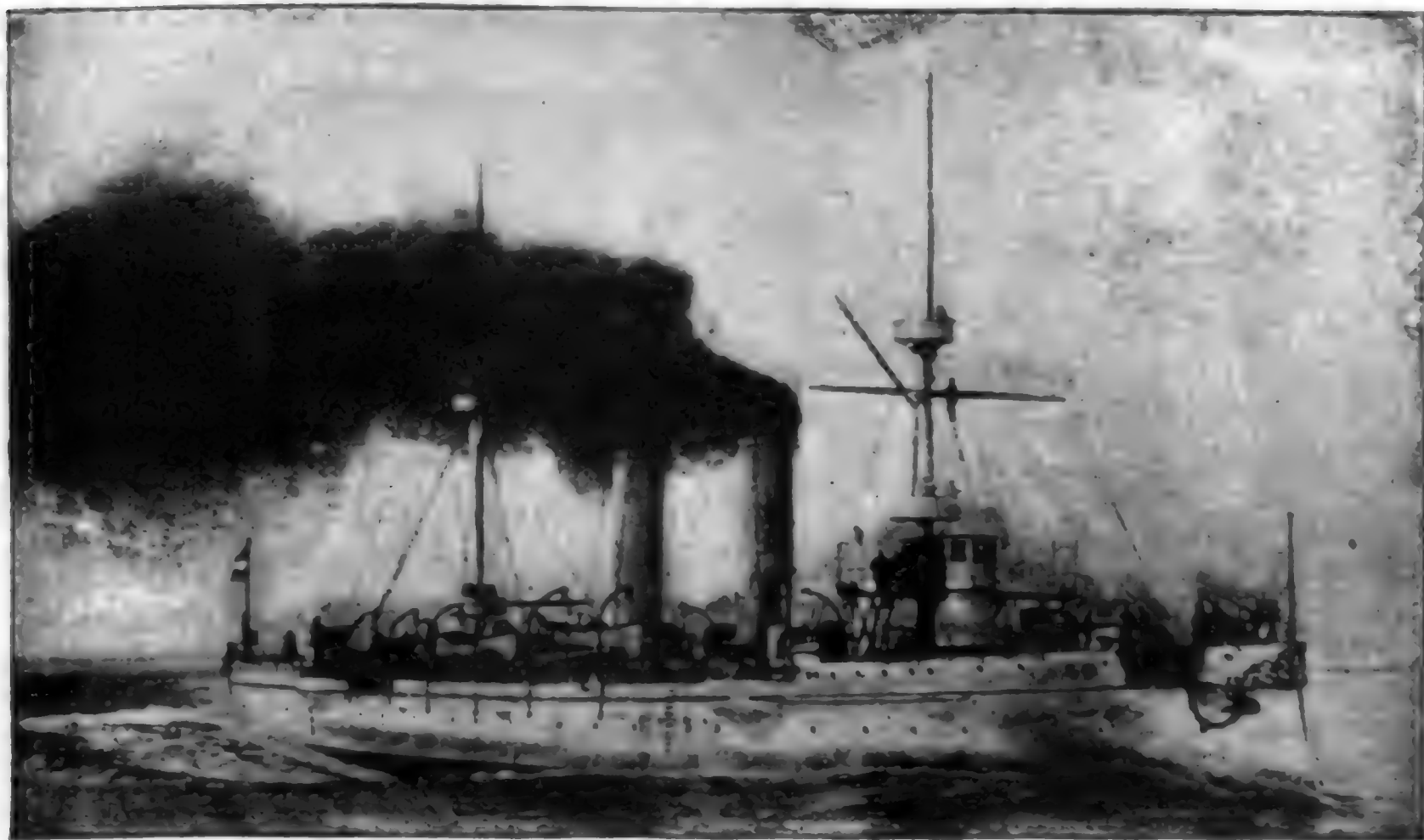
It was during the Crimean war that Lord Armstrong first turned his mechanical genius to the improvement of guns. Inkerman and other engagements made manifest the deficiencies in the then existing artillery; and the Tyneside engineer set before himself the problem how, with less weight of metal, greater length and precision in the range of the gun could be obtained. The war was ended before a satisfactory answer was obtained to this problem; but when the new invention was, in 1856, at length submitted to the military authorities, it was so perfect that the traditional conservatism of the official mind was simply carried by storm. Very entertaining and interesting is Lord Armstrong's account of the innumerable experiments he had to make before the first gun, which cost £1,000, was ready for the inspection of the experts. The gun was tested again and again on the moors of Allenhead, and the people of this remote district were at first seized with panic, fearing foreign invasion, when the reverberations of distant firing reached them.

"At a later period," Lord Armstrong tells me, "we used to test the guns on my estate here. They were brought from Elswick by road, and then had to be dragged up these hills."

Whilst talking of this period of his life, Lord Armstrong, however, says not a word regarding a circumstance which not



HYDRAULIC SWING BRIDGE OVER THE TYNE. BUILT BY ARMSTRONG, MITCHELL AND CO.



ARGENTINE CRUISER, "9 DE JULIO." BUILT BY ARMSTRONG, MITCHELL AND CO.

a few readers may remember — the generous gift made by the inventor to his country of all the patent rights in the new guns. It was publicly acknowledged by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, and afterwards by the conferment of a knighthood. Then the high state of efficiency to which, in the course of ten years, the Elswick works had been brought was strikingly shown. It was found that there were better facilities at Elswick for the making of the guns than could be found in any of the Government factories. The War Office consequently entered into a contract with Armstrong and Co. to manufacture the guns as they were required, Lord Armstrong becoming Engineer of Rifled Ordnance at a salary of £2,000 a-year. He filled this office till 1863, when the contract was rescinded by mutual consent.

"It was about this time," his lordship remarks, "that I began Crag-side. When I resolved to have a country house, I looked to Rothbury, because the district had many old associations for me; I was so much here in my younger days—as a child I was often afflicted with a severe cough, and the physician used to order me to Rothbury, where the air proved very beneficial. It was only a little bit of land that I purchased from the Duke of Northumberland at first, and the house I built was quite a small one. Both the house and the grounds have been added to from time to time. I dare say you noticed

how the trees planted on the fringe of the estate are quite young, and that they gradually become older as you get nearer to the house, until those immediately around it are large and well-grown."

"I dare say this method of planting had its advantages."

"Yes; I was able to tell which kind of tree prospered best in such conditions. You will find Scotch firs most numerous, especially in the more exposed parts. Of course, for a great many years I came here only on an occasional holiday, and from Saturday till Monday. At that time the train did not come nearer than Morpeth, and the rest of the distance one had to drive.

"Would you like to see my laboratory?" Lord Armstrong says at a pause in the conversation; and he opens a door at the other side of the fireplace, admitting us to a comparatively small chamber filled with electrical instruments of all kinds, with which an assistant is busily employed.

"At present," his lordship states in reply to my inquiry, "I am chiefly engaged in experiments with high tension—the conversion of a low tension current into one of high tension."

"I suppose in electricity there is almost inexhaustible scope for study and experiment?"

"Yes; we are little more than at the beginning of the science. No one can say what the future of electricity may have in store for us."



12½-TON ARMSTRONG GUN ON PNEUMATIC DISAPPEARING CARRIAGE.

"As regards the electric light, great improvement has, of course, been made in recent years?"

"Yes, as I have reason to know," replies Lord Armstrong, with a smile. "Crag-side was one of the first houses to be fitted with the light—some fifteen years ago—and I've suffered the pioneer's fate in having several times to change my plant. At last, however, we've almost reached perfection, and the light never fails us now. The motive power is obtained from the stream of water you saw in the grounds, and in the installation I had the assistance of my friend Mr. Swan. The water-power is cheaper and pleasanter than the steam, but we've a small engine available in case of emergencies. Fortunately we have plenty of water; this long drought has tried the supply severely, but, of course, being summer, little light has been required."

"I should much like to see this machinery, Lord Armstrong."

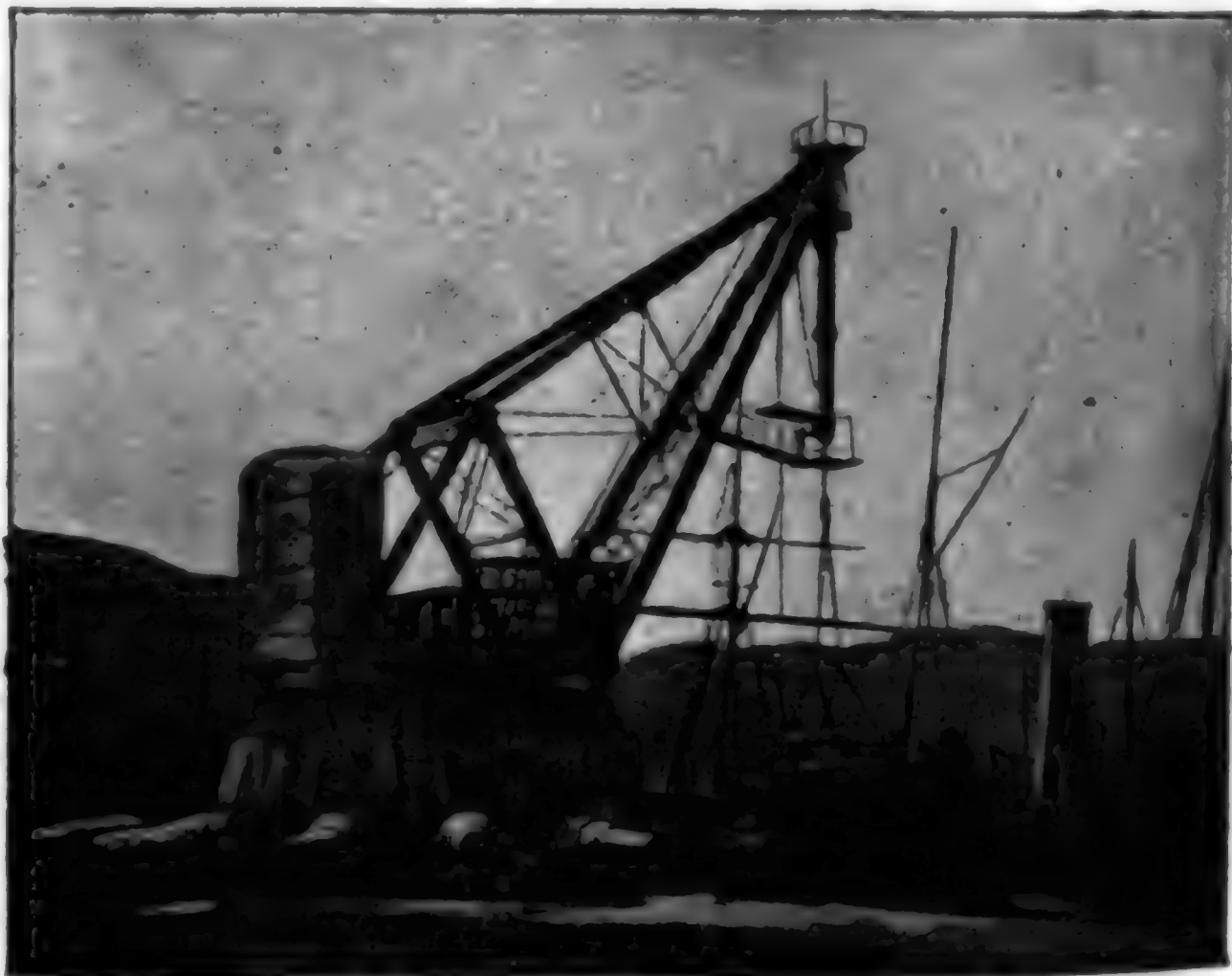
"Yes, certainly. My steward shall show you all over the place."

Lord Armstrong departs to give the necessary orders, leaving me admiring the handsome fireplace of terra-cotta and marble, as I sit in an easy-chair by its side. The fine,

classical design, was doubtless the work of Norman Shaw, R.A., to whose art Crag-side owes some part of its attractiveness. Then I turn to a side-table, on which is placed the souvenir of the visit paid to Crag-side by the Prince and Princess of Wales in the summer of 1884, on the occasion of the opening of Jesmond

Dene, Lord Armstrong's magnificent present to the people of Newcastle. The handsomely illuminated volume stands on a small oaken table, made from wood used in the building of Hadrian's bridge over the Tyne in the time of the Romans. The timber, which was discovered when the foundations of the present high-level bridge were being laid, must have been growing in the life-time of Jesus Christ.

On this small table, in amusing juxtaposition to the brilliant souvenir, are a puzzle-toy and a set of the game of halma, giving evidence of hard usage, both, I imagine, being the property of a little relative of his lordship's, the daughter of a nephew, Mr. Watson Armstrong, who, Lord Armstrong being



160-TON CRANE SURROUNDED BY 100-TON GUNS.

childless, is generally regarded as the heir.

"It'll take you about two hours, I think," said Lord Armstrong, as he introduced me to his steward. This time was given to us although we drove as much as possible in a waggonette which, with its ingenious protection against wind, rain and sunshine, is of the inventor's own designing. We drove first to the electrical station, then to the carpenter's shop, the green-houses, the fine new stables and by the three lakes, artificially made to provide hydraulic power, the steward, with an affectionate enthusiasm proceeding from thirty years' service, pointing out and explaining the skill his employer had brought to bear upon every important

Lord Armstrong in the library, a long and lofty apartment, well lighted at one end by an oriel window. The books are ranged round the greater part of the room, the cases not being high enough to be beyond hand's reach, and on the walls above hang a number of pictures. Of these I remember best a beautiful panelled work by Albert Moore, called "Follow My Leader," the subject being half-a-dozen Grecian maidens in graceful flight.

In the course of conversation we happen to touch upon the interesting question of the future of our coal supply. Lord Armstrong fully adheres to the views expressed in his address as President of the British Association at the Newcastle meeting some years ago.



A GUN SHOW ROOM AT ELSWICK.

detail. The drive was most exhilarating, with its picturesque views and bracing breezes. A broad, smooth carriage drive round the estate is six miles in length, and Lord Armstrong, who is still fond of the reins, need never go outside his gates for his daily drive.

"East or West, hame's best." Such is the inscription which meets my eye on sitting at the large round table in the dining-room. It is carved in stone on the Elizabethan fire-place, on either side of which, in keeping with the sentiment, are delightful "cosy corners," in the form of oaken seats amply cushioned. The pictures on the wainscoted walls, I notice, are chiefly of cattle grazing and similar rural subjects.

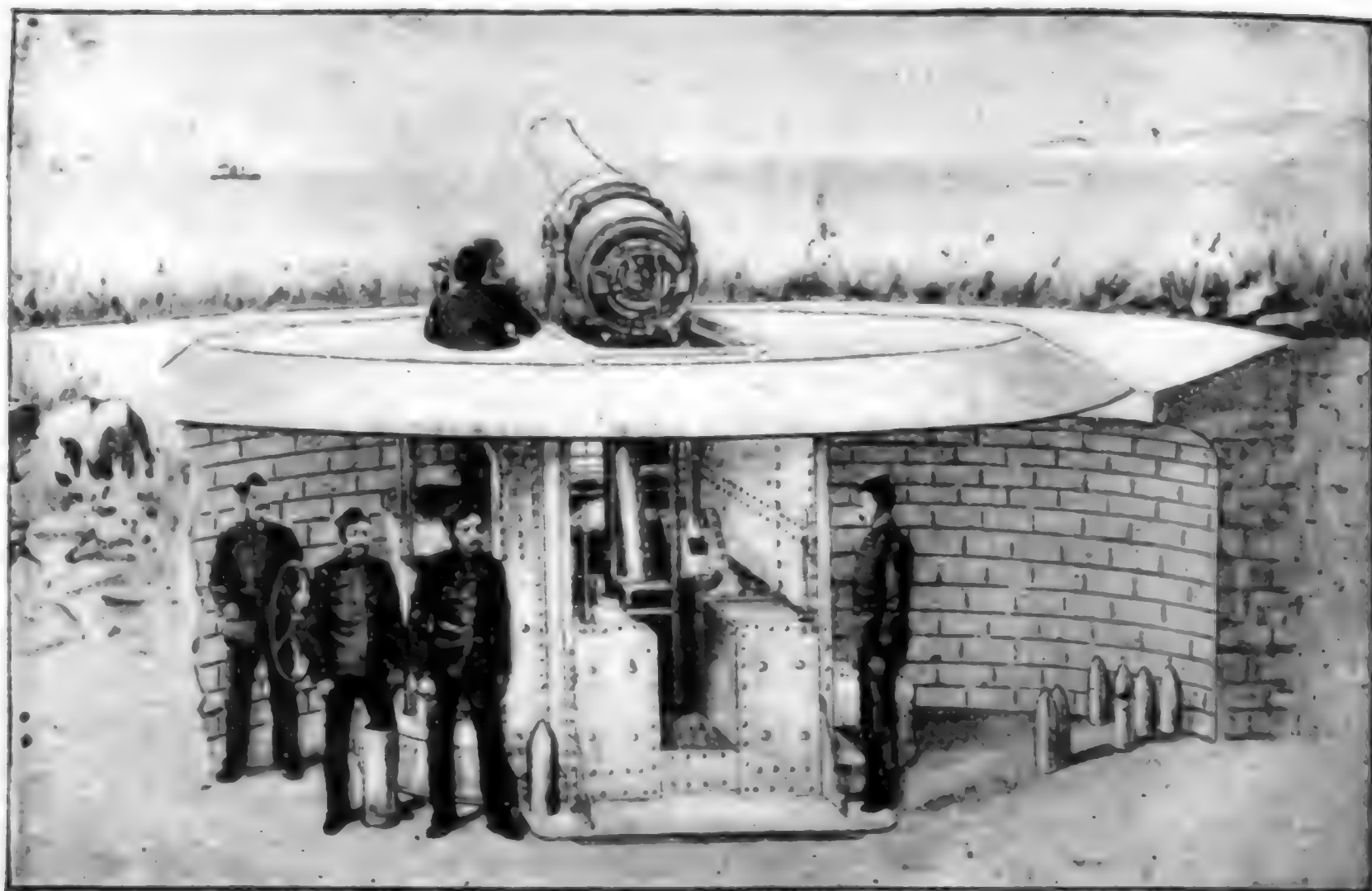
After luncheon I have another talk with

"It is now generally admitted that England, at the present rate of production, is within measurable distance of the exhaustion of her coal supply. Before this actually occurs large quantities of coal will be produced in America and other parts of the world, and with the rapid improvement in the speed and cost of transport, the importation of this will probably be cheaper than the cost of production in England."

"This must seriously affect our national future?"

"It cannot fail to have some considerable effect, of course."

"But it is urged, is it not, that before this comes to pass, there will be some fresh motive-power to take the place of steam?"



14-INCH QUICK FIRING GUN ON DISAPPEARING CARRIAGE, FIRING POSITION.

"That may be, but all motive-power is but the production of energy, and in getting this energy you must consume something. The question is, can anything be consumed that will be cheaper than coal. I think not. Electricity, for instance, might take the place of steam as a motive power, but coal, or some more expensive kind of energy, must be employed in producing it."

The wide range of Lord Armstrong's interests, octogenarian though he is, is strikingly shown by the burden of papers and books on a small table at my side. Transactions of the various learned societies with which Lord Armstrong is honourably identified are mingled with reports of various charitable organisations to which he gives generous support; reports of the proceedings of different Parliamentary committees lie side by side with pamphlets on Home Rule and other political questions. On a much larger table, in addition to all the best known works of reference, are copies of the current reviews—*Nineteenth Century*, *Fortnightly*, etc. Lord Armstrong's writing-table, on the other hand, is free from the encumbrance of books and papers, being simply furnished with a box of stationery, pens and blotting-pad. In the course of his busy life Lord Armstrong has occasionally found time to put pen to paper with literary intent. On returning from a

visit to Egypt, he prepared a series of lectures for the Philosophical Institution at Newcastle-on-Tyne, which were afterwards published in book form. To the catalogue of the Inventions Exhibition he contributed an essay on Hydraulic Machinery; and in the records of the Royal Society his authorship is also to be found.

On the long table, which fills the centre of the library, there is much to interest the visitor to Cragside. Bound in an imposing volume, is a *facsimile* of *The Illustrated Arctic News*, a monthly journal published on board H.M.S. *Resolute* during the search for Sir John Franklin, and circulated in MS. copies among the expedition of which she formed part. The paper was edited by Lieutenant Sherwood Osborne and Mr. Geo. McDougall, and by picture, verse and paragraph gives one a lively idea of the life led by the members of the expedition and the efforts made to infuse warmth and cheerfulness amid their Arctic surroundings.

Perhaps the most interesting volume on the table, however, is the Cragside Visitors' Book. On the first page, in good bold characters and with broad margins of space, are inscribed the names of "Alexandra," "Albert Edward," "Edward," "George," "Louise," "Victoria," and "Maud." Turning from this memento of the visit of the Prince and Princess of

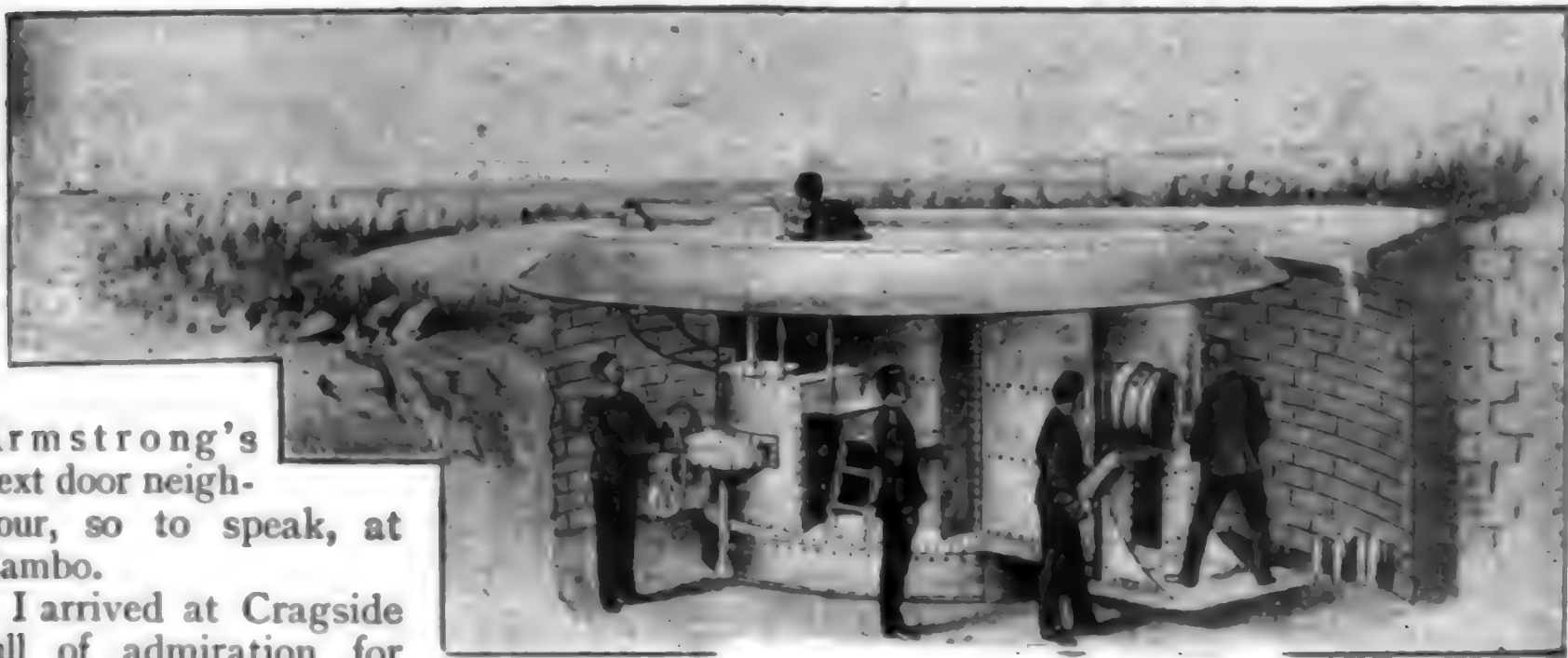
Wales with their family, one comes quickly across distinguished names in all languages. Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain's occur under the date "1889;" while among the more recent entries is that of Dr. Nansen, the Franklin of the hour. A remarkable feature of the book is the frequency with which Japanese names occur. This may be explained by the fact that some forty or fifty young Japs of high social position have been articulated as pupils to Sir William Armstrong, Mitchell and Company, at Elswick. Several of the foreign ambassadors' names are to be found here, as well as most of those of the agents general for the Colonies. Sir George and Lady Trevelyan's occur with some frequency, the Secretary for Scotland being Lord

just seen Cragside, a most beautiful residence I should, indeed, have thought it. The Dene is traversed throughout by a running stream, which forms at one part a pretty cascade, and on its hilly slopes grow splendid trees and plants, gathered from all parts of the world, with mountain gorse and wild flowers in profusion. In its midst is a banqueting-hall which, with its spacious reception room, marble staircase and handsome gallery, will comfortably accommodate three hundred guests, this being included in Lord and Lady Armstrong's gift to Newcastle. This picture of sylvan beauty is, indeed, in strange contrast to the smoke and grime of the city, close to whose doors it is situated, and the contrast is effectively brought home to my mind when, after a short

Armstrong's next door neighbour, so to speak, at Cambo.

I arrived at Cragside full of admiration for the beauty and charm which it has acquired from art and nature. On my departure, driving through Rothbury and across the bridge over the picturesque Coquet, I am chiefly impressed by the strong character and the interesting personality of Lord Armstrong: by his kindness and simplicity, no less than by his resolution and strength of purpose. This impression is greatly intensified when, after a two hours' railway journey, I stroll through the streets of Newcastle, listening to a Tynesider's enthusiastic account of his lordship's generosity to his native city, his endowment of hospitals and infirmaries, his practical interest in the welfare of literary and educational institutions, and, afterwards, accompanying him to Jesmond Dene.

At the mansion in the Dene, Lady Armstrong was at the moment residing, suffering from the malady which was so soon to prove fatal; and, had I not



DISAPPEARING CARRIAGE. LOADING GUN.

drive, I find myself in the great Elswick Works.

Elswick is a domain rather jealously guarded. Comparatively few of the people of Newcastle have made the tour of the works. And it is, indeed, not a task to be lightly entered upon. Armed as I was with a letter from Lord Armstrong, the fortress was not already captured, as I had fondly imagined. Having satisfied the janitor at the large gate of my *bona fides*, I had then to run the gauntlet of half-a-dozen officials, passing up and down staircases and through passages until I was introduced to a gentleman with authority to appoint a guide to accompany me through the works. They are constantly on the alert at Elswick for the designing engineer and the enterprising foreigner, the American being more particularly an object of suspicion. Hence, the rigid exclusion of the stranger. As it

is, there are several "shops" where important models and designs are kept, which only a few members of the staff at "Armstrong's" are ever allowed to enter.

The task of seeing Elswick is, as I have said, not to be lightly undertaken. You must have great physical vigour and stoical indifference to hunger if it is to be accomplished in the course of a day. Even then anything like minute inspection is out of the question. On first entering the engineering shops one has merely an overwhelming impression of the magnitude and variety of the machinery at work, with its deafening multiplicity of noises and many different functions. Steel and iron are being cut, planed, punched and chiselled, as if it were wood, for the smaller parts of cranes, dock-gates, etc. It was in these shops that the great cranes and gates for the Bute Docks at Cardiff were made, including a crane, two hundred and eighty tons, and eighty feet in height, also the gate weighing one hundred and sixty tons for the harbour at Malta. As a rule, one thousand five hundred men are employed in this department, which covers nine acres, and contains three hundred machines.

The hydraulic crane was the beginning of the great Elswick firm, but it is in the construction of ordnance, of course, that its greatest fame has been obtained. In this department no fewer than five thousand men are often employed, some in the immense foundry (ninety yards long by seventy wide) and the hammer-shed; others in the boring and finishing shops. The largest of their steam-hammers is of thirty-five tons weight, and to see it pressing a mass of red-hot metal into the shape of a gun is one of the most interesting sights in the Elswick Works. This splendid piece of mechanism, known to the workmen as "Big Ben," is considered to be the finest of its kind. It is so delicately adjusted that it will crack a nut without breaking the kernel, and this with the same power which pulverises tons of metal with a thud that shakes the floor. When the Prince of Wales visited Elswick, nearly ten years ago, he placed his hand under this gigantic tool, and it just touched the flesh, which, with equal facility, it could have crushed. The hammer is worked by three or four men, one regulating the force of the blow, and

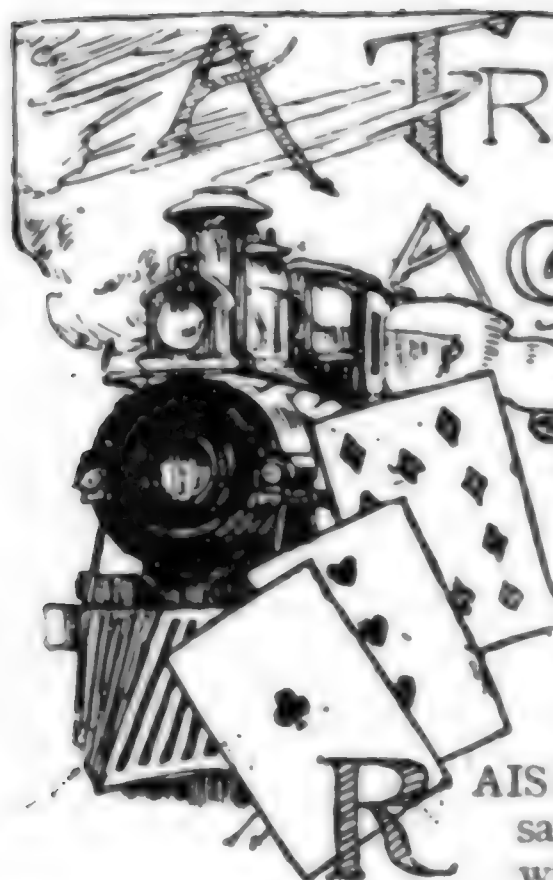
the others manipulating the burning metal with large tongs, while sparks fly around fast and furiously.

In the ordnance department there are guns in all stages of construction, and the larger ones are finished in the same place as they were begun. The smaller ones are finished—polished, browned and varnished—in a separate shop. Most of those one sees being made have been ordered by the British and foreign governments, but at "Armstrong's" there is always kept a stock of ordnance of different kinds and sizes. It is from the specimens kept in these large galleries that the representatives of the war offices of the world give their orders. They are sold ready-made when guns are required at short notice in any quarter of the globe. Just before my visit the stock of probably a hundred pieces had been slightly reduced in compliance with urgent orders from Siam, which was then on the threshold of war with France. Before the final departure of the guns, however, they have to be taken considerable distances to be tested, some going to Ridsdale, some to Rothbury, and others, of the biggest kind, to a place on the Western coast. To indicate the complexity of the work of making modern ordnance it is only necessary to mention, perhaps, that in this department of "Armstrong's" there are no fewer than eight hundred to nine hundred machines.

It was at "Armstrong's" that the famous *Esmeralda* was built for the Chilian fleet, a splendid model of the fast cruiser to which Lord Armstrong has always pinned his faith, as opposed to the heavy iron-clads, which it is the policy of our own Admiralty to build and continue building at such immense cost.

This great industry of the North of England, whose only rival, as regards arsenals, is Krupp's famous works in Germany, is the creation of one man, but, as Lord Armstrong would be the first to admit, its development and continued prosperity owe not a little to able managers. Captain Noble, Mr. Watts, Colonel Dyer and Mr. Hoyle, in their respective departments, are men whose selection for the important positions they fill is in itself a proof of the good business qualities which, in the case of Lord Armstrong, have been united with scientific powers of the highest order.

A TRIUMPH OF AUDACITY OR A COUNTERFEIT DESPERADO. BY CALDWELL LIPSETT.



RAISE you again," said the man with the red beard calmly. I had seen his hand, which, as he would say himself, wasn't worth a red cent, and thought in my own mind that he was the coolest customer I had come across for a long time. I had reason to endorse that opinion, as you will hear, before I had seen the last of him.

I was travelling at the time on the Grand Trunk Railway, between San Francisco and Chicago, and there were in the compartment with me four other men, strangers to me, but evidently acquainted with each other, who were beguiling the time by playing poker together.

In the pauses of the game the conversation chiefly turned on the doings of a robber, nicknamed Redbeard, who was just then making the tract of country we were passing through the scene of a series of desperate exploits and cold-blooded atrocities.

He had been a bushranger in Australia, rumour said, until the country grew too hot to hold him, when he had transferred his attention to the trade of a road-agent in the States, and had soon made his name famous for his recklessness and cruelty.

In answer to a question of mine as to the personal appearance of this miscreant, one of our party replied: "Well, he's just an ordinary-looking cuss with a red beard, as you can tell by the name; a bit under the middle height, but broad and strong. Nobody knows very much about him as yet, for he does all his work alone and leaves very few to bear witness against

him; but, as far as can be told, Dick Brooks, over there, might sit for his portrait—a compliment for you, Dick.

Dick only laughed.

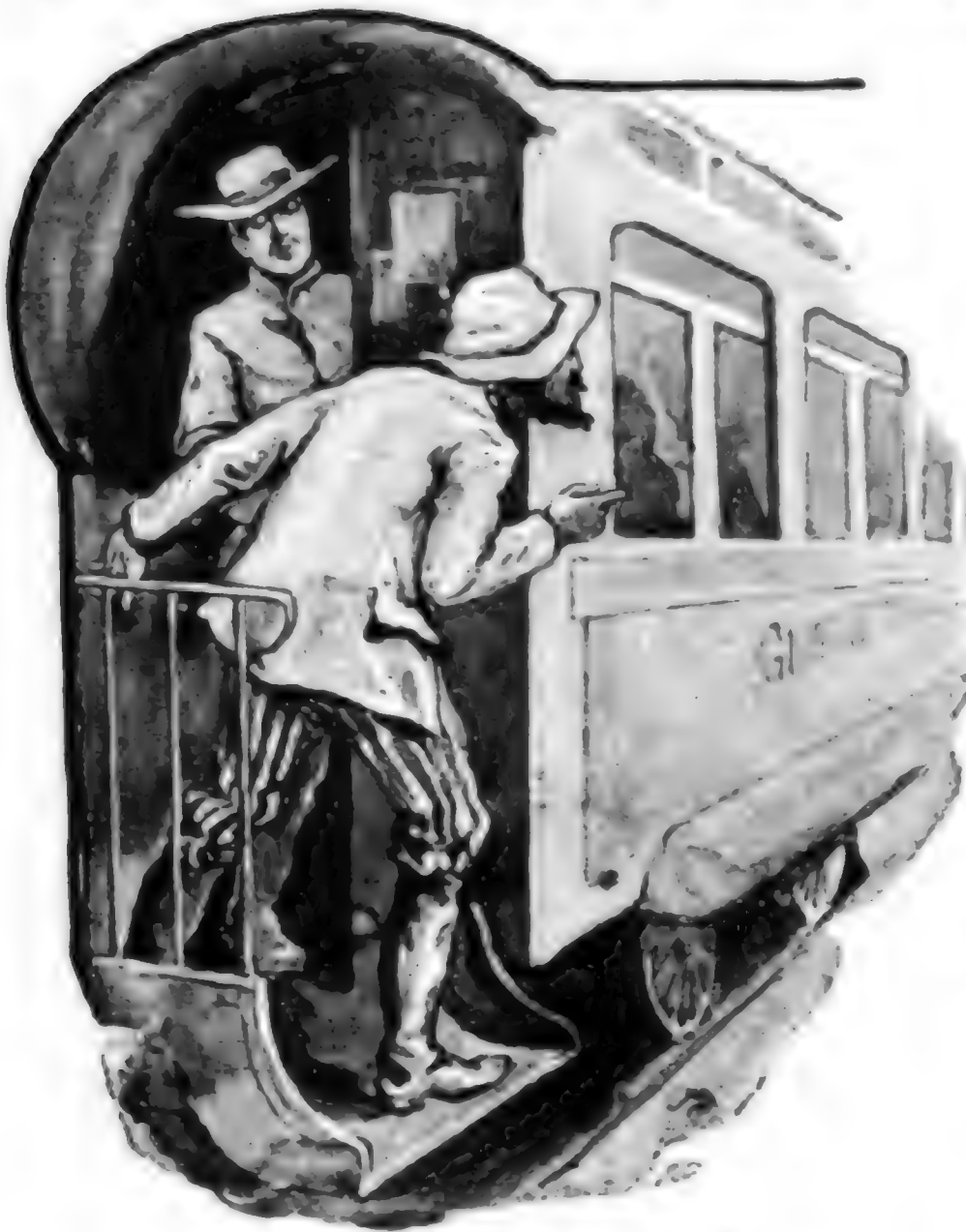
Not very long afterwards the train suddenly came to a stop, and a noise begun as if Bedlam had suddenly broken loose—such a yelling and firing off of rifles and revolvers as I had never heard before and hope never to hear again.

My four companions took it very philosophically. "Guess the line's blocked by some of those road-agents, stranger, and, maybe, you'll have a chance now of seeing what Redbeard's like," remarked one of them: and then placidly went on with the game.

"Ay," said another; "I heard there was some money to pay the troops being sent by this train, so they ought to make a good haul. It's a wonder government didn't send a guard along, but I



"RAISE YOU AGAIN."



"I'M GOING OUT TO SEE THE FUN."

suppose they thought they had kept it all dark."

"I'm going out to see the fun," suddenly exclaimed the man mentioned as Brooks, opening the carriage door; "who else is on?"

As none of the others appeared keen, I volunteered to accompany him, out of curiosity, expecting a new experience; and, certainly, it was a new experience to see a whole train-load of people looking quietly on while an armed gang of robbers spoiled the mails.

"Why don't these people attack the scoundrels?" I asked my companion. "There are plenty of men about, and they can't all be afraid, surely."

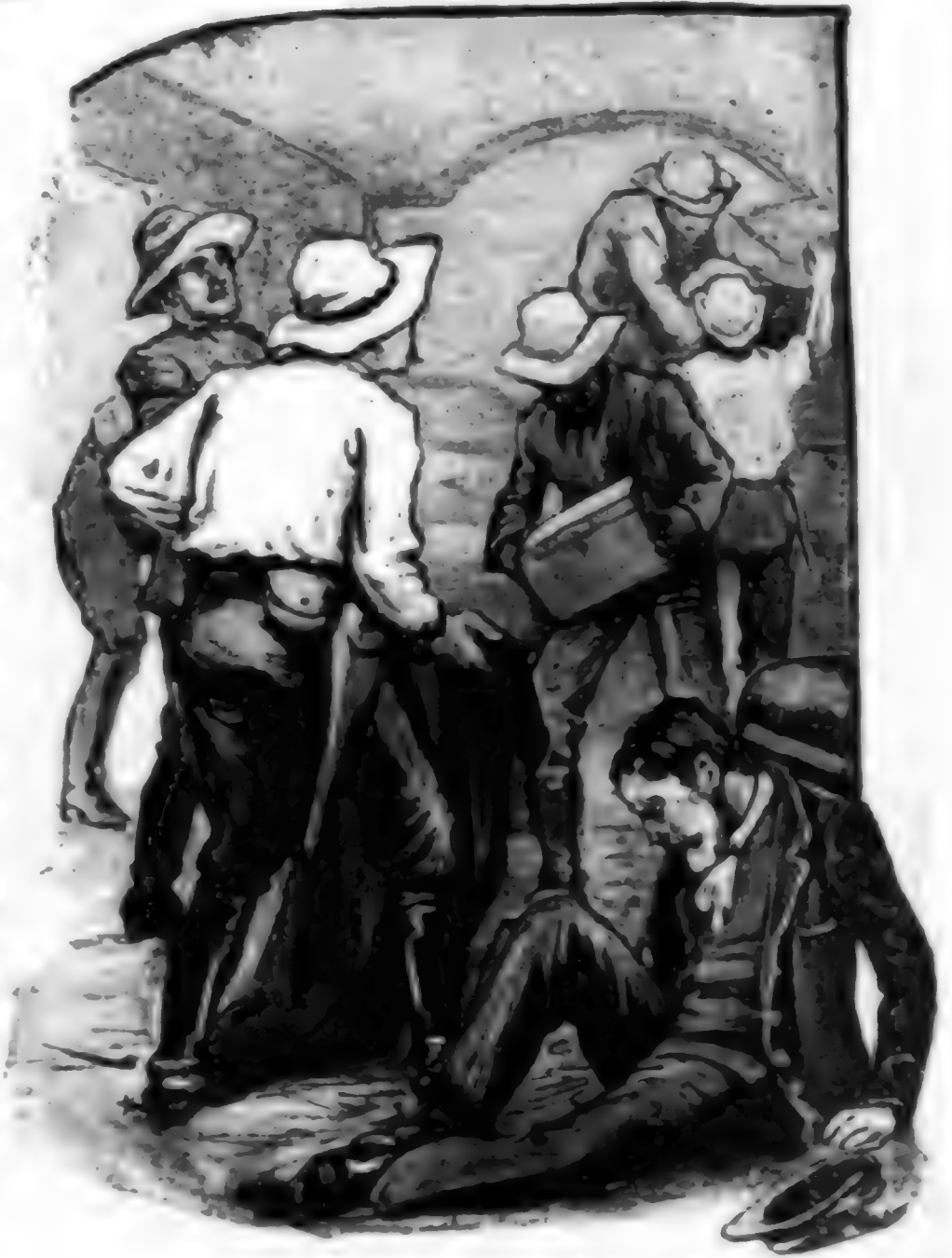
"Well, you see," he replied, "it's none of their business, and no one wants to get shot in somebody else's quarrel; if the road-agents wanted to rob them, they'd soon show their claws, but, as it is, the beggars will just take the mails and make off, and that's the government's look-out."

By this time we had reached the

guard's van, and looked in. Several of the passengers were standing about, watching the proceedings quietly, as if it were a play got up for their amusement. Inside, the guard was lying in a heap in the corner, with a bullet-hole through his side, and a little stream of blood trickling from it; while five rough-looking men were rifling the mail-bags and throwing everything they thought valuable into a sack. They appeared to be just finishing their job as we came up.

My companion looked at them closely for a minute, muttered something between his teeth, that sounded like, "They said he always works alone;" then suddenly his manner changed, he said sternly to me: "Wait here for me," stepped into the van, and walking straight up to the group, commanded in a deep voice: "Throw up your hands, every man Jack of you."

For a moment there was a dead pause. Then one of the gang laid his hand on his pistol with an oath.



THE GUARD WAS LYING IN A HEAP.

"You needn't show your teeth," said Brooks quietly; "I'm Redbeard, and mean to have the swag, so best hand it over without any trouble: put down those tools."

Here, indeed, was a shock. This quiet-mannered man I had been sitting beside for the last three or four hours, had turned out to be the famous desperado, and was vindicating his reputation before my eyes by an act of daring that threw all his previous exploits into the shade. That one man should beard these five ruffians, everyone of whom bore the stamp of murder on his face, when they had such an amount of treasure in their very grasp and had tasted blood, and command them to disgorge their spoil, would have appeared to me absolutely incredible had I not seen it. But the very desperation of the act, joined to the fearlessness of the man, was his greatest safeguard. It was not wholly that they were overawed by the terror of his name; they knew, it is true, that Redbeard had faced greater odds before and had come off victorious; but in ordinary cases that remembrance would not have had time to occur to them. The ascendancy, it at once became evident he exercised over them, was obtained on the instant, and was moral rather than material: they appeared stunned, panic-stricken, by the dare-devilry of this man; his was a stronger nature than theirs, and they quailed visibly before his eye, as jackals quail before a lion.

And then I saw the greatest triumph of sheer audacity I ever witnessed, a case of spoiling the Philistines with a vengeance. "Come, hurry up," said Redbeard; and the whole five threw their weapons down sullenly, while one of them handed him the sack.



"THROW UP YOUR HANDS."

"Keep this," he said to me, passing it on, but never taking his eye off his quelled opponents. "And you," he added to them, "come out of there and clear the line of the mess you've made on it."

At this command they all eyed their weapons with regret; but it was too late now, for unarmed, he had them at his mercy. Once or twice, too, while they worked at their uncongenial task of removing the logs with which they themselves had stopped the way of the train, I thought they were going to turn restive; but by this time they were surrounded by a crowd of passengers, regularly vibrating with curiosity and admiration, domi-

nated, too, by the extraordinary personality of this man, and ready to shoot them down at the least sign of resistance to his commands.

When the work was completed we all got into our places again and the train moved off, leaving the little band of road-agents weaponless in the middle of the prairie.

In our compartment we all settled down



THREW THEIR WEAPONS DOWN SULLENLY.

to poker again almost immediately, as if nothing extraordinary had happened, the only difference being that this time I took a hand.

At the next station where we stopped two detectives came into the carriage, and one of them said, "I think one of you gentlemen has got the stolen mails in your possession."

"Yes," said Brooks, "here they are," handing them over to him.

"Thanks," said the man, passing them to his comrade, and then he threw himself violently upon the giver and handcuffed him.

Brooks sat still and grinned; we all roared with laughter. The detective seemed surprised; he had entered the carriage with his life in his hand and prepared for a desperate resistance, and such a reception as this puzzled him.

"I suppose you take me for Redbeard?" said Brooks at last.

"Yes."

"Well, do you know his appearance yourself?"

"No."

"Does any of your men?"

"Yes, several."

"Then send for them."

When the other policemen came the detective asked them: "Do you know the road-agent called Redbeard by sight?"

"Yes."

"Is this he?"

"No, nothing like him," came the startling response; "beyond a general resemblance in build and colour of the hair."

"Jerusalem! Then who are you?" cried the detective.

"My name is Brooks, as these friends of mine can testify, and I am a respectable member of society, so far as that can be said of a poor devil of a journalist, without a cent to his name."

"Then where's the Redbeard that robbed the train?"

"Well, I'm the only Redbeard in the show, and I didn't rob the train but only the road-agents. I thought his name might come in useful, and perhaps they wouldn't know the difference, so I just



TWO DETECTIVES CAME IN.

chanced it; and now, if you please, I'll put in a claim for salvage on those mails."

He got his salvage; and if ever a man earned such a reward I think you will agree that man was Dick Brooks, the day he understudied the part of Redbeard.

Modern Billiards and Exponents of the Game.



POSITION OF THE HAND, SHOWING THE BRIDGE.

SOME of my readers may ask why I should call this article "Modern" billiards, when the game has been known for many past generations. But without going into the history of billiards, it is found that the game, as it is now played, compared with the billiards of our forefathers of the last century, resembles a comparison of one of our present naval leviathans with the ancient Noah's Ark.

Billiards, if not a science, is, at any rate, a scientific game; for unless a man has a certain gift for it, all the practice and all the study in the world will never make him an expert; while, on the other hand, however great may be his natural gifts, it is absolutely indispensable that he studies the game.

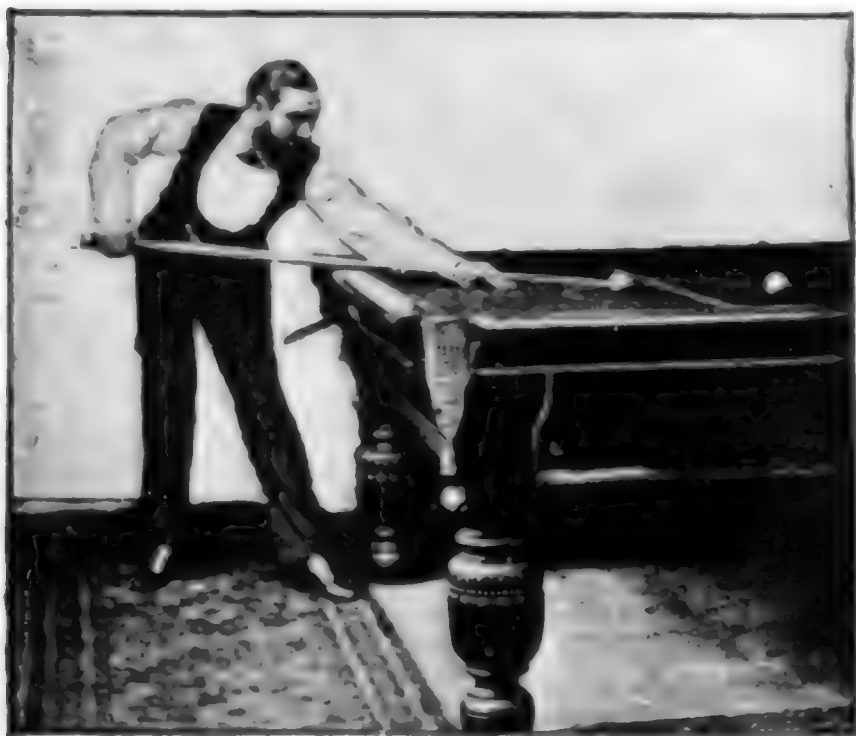
Some persons look upon billiards with great disgust; but I fail to see why this should be, beyond the fact that it is generally at the Club or Hotel where the game is played—for it is only the favoured few that can boast of their private billiard-room; and, though many could well afford the luxury, there are not many houses built that could boast of a room sufficiently large to suit the requirements for billiards.

Nothing to my mind is more enjoyable than a game on the board of green cloth with a friend, especially after a hard day's work, on a cold winter's evening.

It is certainly most invigorating to the mind, for it forces sole attention to the play, thereby setting aside all the cares or troubles of business. It is healthy; because it brings into action muscles that have otherwise been dormant, and would remain so, were it not for billiards or other similar exercise. It is the king of all indoor games, because it not only provides exercise, but it is, as I have already mentioned, a distinctly scientific game, equally as interesting to an onlooker as it is to the player.

The principal qualifications for an expert player are the power of dynamical calculation, presence of mind, a steady hand and a sure eye. He has to estimate the "strength" of his stroke and the elasticity of the cushions; to follow instinctively the angles of incidence and reflection; to allow exactly for the disturbing influence of the "side" imparted by striking his ball in a peculiar spot, and to be able to leave the three balls near any given position after a variety of impacts and rebounds.

The game is supposed to be of Italian or French invention; but from France, at all events, it found its way to England, where it was known in the sixteenth century, as appears from a passage in Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra," Act ii., sc. 5, in which billiards is repre-



THE ORDINARY POSITION.



THE PUSH STROKE.

sented as a pastime of the amorous Queen of Egypt!

In order that I might obtain a few hints on the progress of the game in England, I called upon the world-renowned manufacturers of billiard tables, Messrs. Burroughes and Watts, Soho Square, London. Mr. James Burroughes had just entered his artistic little sanctum after his mid-day meal, and the jovial smile with which he greeted me, showed at a glance he was quite prepared to give me a few moments, and let me into a few of the secrets of his business.

Having somewhat explained my mission in a few words, the head of the great firm at a moment understood what I wanted, for it was not the first time he had been bored by the questionings of the pressman.

"Well, if I cannot help you, I can only show my willingness," was his first reply. "I was born in this very house, worked for years at the bench, at which my son, who is to succeed me here, is now going through his facings."

Calling to one of his employes, Mr. Burroughes asked for one of the pictures that adorned the ground-floor reception room.

This, he informed me, he had carefully prepared himself: it was diagrams of billiard cushions from the beginning of the present century.

It showed the old table, used from 1800 to 1826, with its wooden bed, cushions made of "list," and wooden-tipped cue.

"On this table," said Mr. Burroughes, "the game was twenty-one up; but from 1827, you will notice, we get to the intro-



PLAYING WITH BALL NEAR THE CUSHION.



PLAYING WITH BALL UNDER THE CUSHION.



PLAYING WITH THE REST.

duction of rubber cushion and slate bed. Between this and 1837 Kentfield was champion, and his break of 196 was considered a marvellous performance. Gradually the quality of the rubber was improved, you will notice, as it is shown here, during the elder John Roberts' period of championship, and the play naturally improved, until he made his highest compilation, 346 (104 spots). In 1870, the great invincible Roberts, who had enjoyed an unbroken spell of supremacy, was challenged by William Cook, who had been building up a great reputation, and it was at this date that the celebrated low cushion first came into force, and a table, specially fitted by 'our firm,' was selected by Roberts the Great for the great contest.

"Now we are having contests, as you are aware," said Mr. Burroughes, "of 24,000 up, spot-barred, and we have numerous players that scarcely rank second-class that could give the late veteran a long start.

"But this is mainly due to the vast improvements in the tables; more especially in the cushions, which are now made, so as to allow of a fair stroke to be made at a ball that rests upon the cushion."

I was delighted with my visit to Messrs. Burroughes and Watts, and, though I consider myself a bit of a cueist, I was much edified after going through the vast workshops.

To Mr. Burroughes I am indebted for the illustrations of William Cook, in the various positions of play, these having been taken under his special instructions.

Before I left the great billiard caterer I was deeply interested in the manufacture of ivory billiard balls, which I had

fully explained to me, and I am only sorry my space will not allow me to deal with this subject.

"Billiards you must find very much more popular now, Mr. Burroughes?" I asked, as I was taking my leave.

"Decidedly, for when we commenced here in 1836, there were but two billiard-table makers in London, and now, I think, we number near seventy."

Messrs. Thurston and Co. are one of the old school, and I have just paid a visit of investigation to the old wooden-bedded tables they are now exhibiting at the Royal Aquarium, the old home of the game.

To a casual visitor of the billiard-room, the game presents very little to interest him, for, should he happen to sit and watch the battle between two beginners, it is quite certain he will gain very little insight into the points of the game; or, on the other hand, if two experts should be engaged, the quiet way in which they make cannon after cannon, and so beautifully manipulate the balls so as to make each shot easy, leads them naturally to the conclusion that there is no skill in it, and that they could do the same themselves; but they would soon find they knew as much about it as the poor "nigger," if they made an attempt.

This little Sambo, with a face shining like a new silk hat, was given the important function of dusting out the billiard-room at the town house of a family who had brought him over from his native country to England. True, he took quite an interest in the room, but the points of the game were all lost to him, as will be gathered from his description of it to



PLAYING BEHIND THE BACK.

his parents, to whom he made a somewhat speedy return. (No wonder.) "Well, what was this game like, Sambo?" asked his old dad. "Well, it is a great, long table, all over green, with six holes round it. Two white men play with a long stick each; one says, 'hard lines,' and the other says, 'd—— it.'"

Poor chappy, that was all he had learned, and very few would learn much more if they chanced to see billiards played for the first time by two decided novices.

It is not my intention to teach the game of billiards, but I am sure many a good hint can be taken from the illustrations as to the correct styles, and which, I am sure, will call to memory a man who gained the highest position in the billiard world. He had chances that, I am almost confident, no other professional ever had, for he was a universal favourite with all with whom he came in contact, from royalty downwards.

Unfortunately, the position was too much for poor Cook, and it was only last year he died in abject poverty.

As an exponent of the game of billiards, he had few, if any, superiors. He played a marvelously pretty game, and many have indeed benefited from his sound tuition. "Cook on Billiards" is a publication I can thoroughly recommend to all. To the beginner it will be found most valuable, while even good players would be able to improve their game by studying well the many good hints and information respecting correct play.

How often it is we hear the truly amateur player, when either conversing on the game or asking a friend to join him in a game of one hundred up, ask this question—"What break do you generally make?" or, "What is your biggest break?" The former might be asked for comparison of the two cueists, so that they can handicap the better player to near the play of the other; while the answer to the latter would imply the

state of proficiency to which he has attained. "Oh, I have often made a break of twenty," is a very common answer to these questions, meaning thereby that the speaker has made a series of hazards or cannons, or the two combined, which amounted to twenty in all, but it is, however, quite possible that, in the proper sense of the word, he may really never have made a "break" at all.

By practice he has gained a certain knowledge of individual strokes, can make easy winning or losing hazards, or cannons, and now and then plays for more difficult strokes with success; but all these do not constitute a "break" in the real meaning of the word, for, even sup-



JOHN ROBERTS, JUNR.

posing a young player compiles a score of twenty, it is only making certain strokes, one after the other; the position of the balls, in order that he may keep on scoring, being left entirely to chance.

For instance, suppose the question is asked, "What are you going to play for?" Answer, "I am going to try and go in off the red." That is playing for the stroke. Suppose, however, the answer is, "I am going in off the red and try to leave it over the middle pocket." That is playing for a break.

Almost anyone can make a few consecutive cannons or red-spot hazards, but those who can make two or three hundred can be counted on the fingers.

Of these we have illustrated the most prominent of our professionals: John Roberts, W. J. Peall, Charles Dawson, William Mitchell, John North and John Lloyd.

John Roberts, who was born August 15, 1847, by the wonderful improvement he has attained in his play during the past eight or ten years, has done wonders to stimulate the popularity of English billiards in this country.

In every branch of sport there are always champions, men who achieve



Photo. by]

WM. MITCHELL.

[F. W. Clark

brilliant victories; but then, again, they always have rivals, to whom they can give but very little away.

Roberts, however, has proved himself for many years head and shoulders above any other player of the spot-barred game, and has beaten most of our great players after conceding them a start of nine thousand out of a game of twenty-four thousand. From the position he has held in the billiard world for so many years, he has made quite a host of admirers, and when he is performing at the Egyptian Hall it is seldom, indeed, his marvellous play is not attentively watched in breathless silence by a crowded house.

For several years his best break was six hundred and ninety, until last season he made a most brilliant break of over seven hundred, and only just in time, for Charles Dawson soon afterwards made a break that would have ranked a record.

Lately, however, Roberts was visited by the American champion, Ives, and a game of half English and half American rules resulted in an easy victory for the American; but our champion is now across the "pond," where, it is to be hoped, he will meet with better success. Roberts has visited South Africa, Australia and India on several occasions, where his play is appreciated as much as it is in England; in fact, he boasts of having been tutor to most of the Indian



Photo. by]

W. J. PEALL.

[R. W. Thomas.

princes, who received him with most hearty welcome. His distinguished pupils have given him many valuable presents and have expressed the hope of receiving another visit.

W. J. Peall is another master, and by some he is considered the real champion of England. As a spot-stroke player, Peall certainly stands as far in front of any other player as Roberts does in the spot-barred game.

The largest break ever made at billiards was made by this marvellous little cueist, who is daily performing in the main building of the Royal Aquarium. This was a masterly break of three thousand three hundred and four, and has never been since approached. It came as an astonishment to the whole of the billiard-playing community, and still remains the marvel of the age.

W. Mitchell is a very pretty player; he hails from Sheffield, and during the winter season he is amongst the chief caterers for providing the lovers of the game with high-class displays.

H. Coles made his first appearance as an exponent of the game at Birmingham. He plays a good game and occasionally comes out with a big break.

Charles Dawson, the young Huddersfield player, is the marvel of the

present age, and his play this year is looked forward to with some interest.

As a spot-stroke player he first made his mark, but this method of progress having been voted monotonous, he has taken up the practice of the spot-barred game.

John North, the Bristolian, I am pleased to say, bids well to attract some attention this year, for his play so far shows he has quite regained his true form, and I predict that he will require a lot of beating from anyone, except Roberts, unless Dawson, or Diggle, of Manchester, come out with further surprises.



Photo. by]

J. LLOYD.

[R. W. Thomas.



Photo. by]

J. NORTH.

[R. W. Thomas.



CHARLES DAWSON.

Shipmates

By ROGER POCOCK.

CHAPTER I.

I JOHN KENDRICK, having come into a little legacy and quitted seafaring, was loafing about in Victoria, British Columbia, trying to make believe I was a gentleman. It was all a sham and a fraud, for I was, and am, and always shall be, a sailor man, which means a fool, worse luck. My hands were as hard as deal planks, and so big I didn't know where to put them; the women laughed at me because I had been so long at sea that I was half afraid of them; and as to the men, I couldn't be bothered with their gabble. In those days I used to stand at my garden-gate, wondering whether, after all, I could ever be happy and content ashore; but the blue heaven and the deep sea gave me the lie, while the wild wind jeered at me as it swept through the apple trees, and roared down the small of my back that I was an ass. Often I would go and hide away, smoking a pipe in my lonely house, for very shame, because I was homesick for the ocean life.

A man isn't long afloat before he gets a hearty belief in Providence. There's many a time I'd have sneaked down to the docks and shipped in the first deep sea craft that offered; but that

a stronger hand than mine seemed always to hold me back. Unknown to me there was a woman, who was to be saved from a very terrible fate; and seemingly it had already been arranged above that I was to have the job.

I'm clumsy with the pen, and the words don't pay out as they should, so I can't hope to make anything very smart of this

yarn. With no warning or foreknowledge of the strange events to come, I was just filling my pipe by the front door, and thinking of nothing at all, when the whole adventure began.

A woman came down the street, a bonny, strong woman, in blue serge, with a sailor's grace and the stride of a healthy man. Her brown hair was all adrift; her sunburnt face was ruddy and bright with health; and she had great dark blue eyes. Somehow I knew that she belonged to the sea; and my heart went out to her. At a safe distance I followed her to her home—a pretty, ship-shape white cottage, that looked down on the straits and kept open house to the sea air, the sea wind and the sunlight. The hot scent of all the rose-gardens was drifting by. Half-blinded with visions, I leant against the blue-washed pal-



WHEN THE WHOLE ADVENTURE BEGAN.

ings by the gate: and all the old heart-sick longing for the ocean life came full upon me: I thought I could see this woman riding the great sea, her strong hands on the tiller, the masterful breeze lingering to play with her hair. But the vision passed away in a moment, for I could hear a child crying within the cottage, and then saw a man drift, in a cloud of tobacco smoke, out of the open door.

I knew him well by sight, this great, broad-shouldered, blue-eyed viking; and often had I been puzzled by the sinister look that added to the fascination of the fellow something of mystery. Through all this lapse of years I can still see him, the handsomest and, I believe, the bravest man I have ever known, strolling down the oyster-shell garden to the gate, and looking me steadily but indifferently in the eyes.

"Captain Branksome, I think?"

"Well, what do you want?"

"Trading up the coast, I believe?"

"That's so."

"I want to ship for a voyage."

"Don't take no loafers."

"I have mate's certificates."

"Don't need no hands. The missus and I works the sloop."

"Well, sorry for that. My doctor has ordered me a voyage; and, from what I've heard of you and the sloop, I concluded I'd ask if you required a working partner."

His eagerness now was not to be concealed, and I saw clearly that to embark in a venture with this man was to imperil all I had.

Just then, however, Mrs. Branksome appeared at the cottage door, and a glance towards her settled all my doubts. That very night the Captain saluted me as partner, and his wife greeted me cheerily as her shipmate.

How vividly do I remember the horse-hair seats, the old-fashioned wax-flowers, the antimacassars, woolwork cushions, and ugly curiosities of the cottage parlour; for it was there that I first made friends with the woman who has been the one great blessing and consolation of my life.

Little did she seem to care for Branksome; and sometimes, when she repulsed his bungling attempts to please her, I felt almost sorry for him. Me he hated from the first, and her every act of kind-

ness and attention tended to aggravate his dislike. From very perversity, I believe, she was the more friendly to me; and sometimes I even begged her to be a little rude, just for his sake.

At last the day came when, apparently driven to desperation, Branksome disappeared; and it was only after a long search, that I found him in the back room of the Oceanic Saloon, dead drunk. At that time it never occurred to me that I was in the wrong; but his conduct, I thought was extremely foolish. Heartily I pitied Mrs. Branksome, especially when next day I came up the road and heard him using horrible language in the parlour.

The Captain, when he discovered my presence, was merely sullen and bearish—she was cordial; and both felt, I suppose, that their domestic unhappiness should not be obtruded upon visitors.

It was not right that she should be made miserable because I loved her; so I wrestled hard with myself, and my good angel helped me, I think, and I went away. For a week I made myself unbearable to some friends up country, then—came back. The Captain had been drunk all the time; the sloop was still only half loaded; and when I went to Mrs. Branksome, she turned her back on me.

For an hour I mooned by the signal-mast in the garden, and wished I was dead; but then, of her own accord, she crept up—eyes red, lips tremulous, and said: "Forgive me; I have been rude to you." Again she turned away; but this time I saw that she was ashamed of being caught crying; so I followed her down a long path of cockleshells, to the green lattice arbour. There she sat down among the cobwebs, looked earnestly in my face and seemed to believe in me.

"There's something on his mind," she said at last. "Six months ago he would have come to me in his trouble. I took him 'for better, for worse'—those were the very words; and when he first came home drunk, I broke my marriage vow. Oh! I am an unworthy wife. I never spoke to him—never reproached him. I just stood in the doorway, and looked at him. That look divorced us—I hate him!"

"You should have talked."

"No; that would have set him on the defensive. He would have justified him-

self, and done it again, to prove he was in the right."

"What could you have done, then?"

"Why, met him next morning with a bright smile; nursed him, petted him; given him a good breakfast—made him ashamed of himself. But it is easy to be wise afterwards—I lost my chance."

"When did you see him?"

"Monday, when you were here last."

"Not for a week?"

"Oh, get him to sea for me, Mr. Kendrick!"

"Ay, for your sake, shipmate, I will."

With a frank, hearty grasp of the hand, Kate thanked me; and a glance of those big, blue eyes sent me away happy.

Her confidence was won.

CHAPTER II.

AT dusk I found the Captain under discussion at the Oceanic, and lounging unnoticed at the bar, heard every word that was said in the inner room.

"Play! Why the fool can't play a little bit—didn't he mistake a poker game for euchre only yesterday?"

"Well, he lets his dust fly, and that's the main thing."

"You vos quide ride, bardner; he blays like a shendleman."

"Why, look you, I'm half scared to sit

down with the man; it's like playing with chain lightning. Where does all his stuff come from, anyway?"

"Oh, a sucker came along and bought a half interest in the sloop. Look here! we are the sucker's partners since I won Branksome's share!"

"Dot vos chust your precious luck——"

"Well, Judas, you've no growl coming.

You won the cottage and his old woman's dowry. Besides, he swore he'd put her up against your winnings to-night. By the way, Judas, if he gets discouraged, and plugs himself full of holes, you'll put up for the funeral, I guess?"

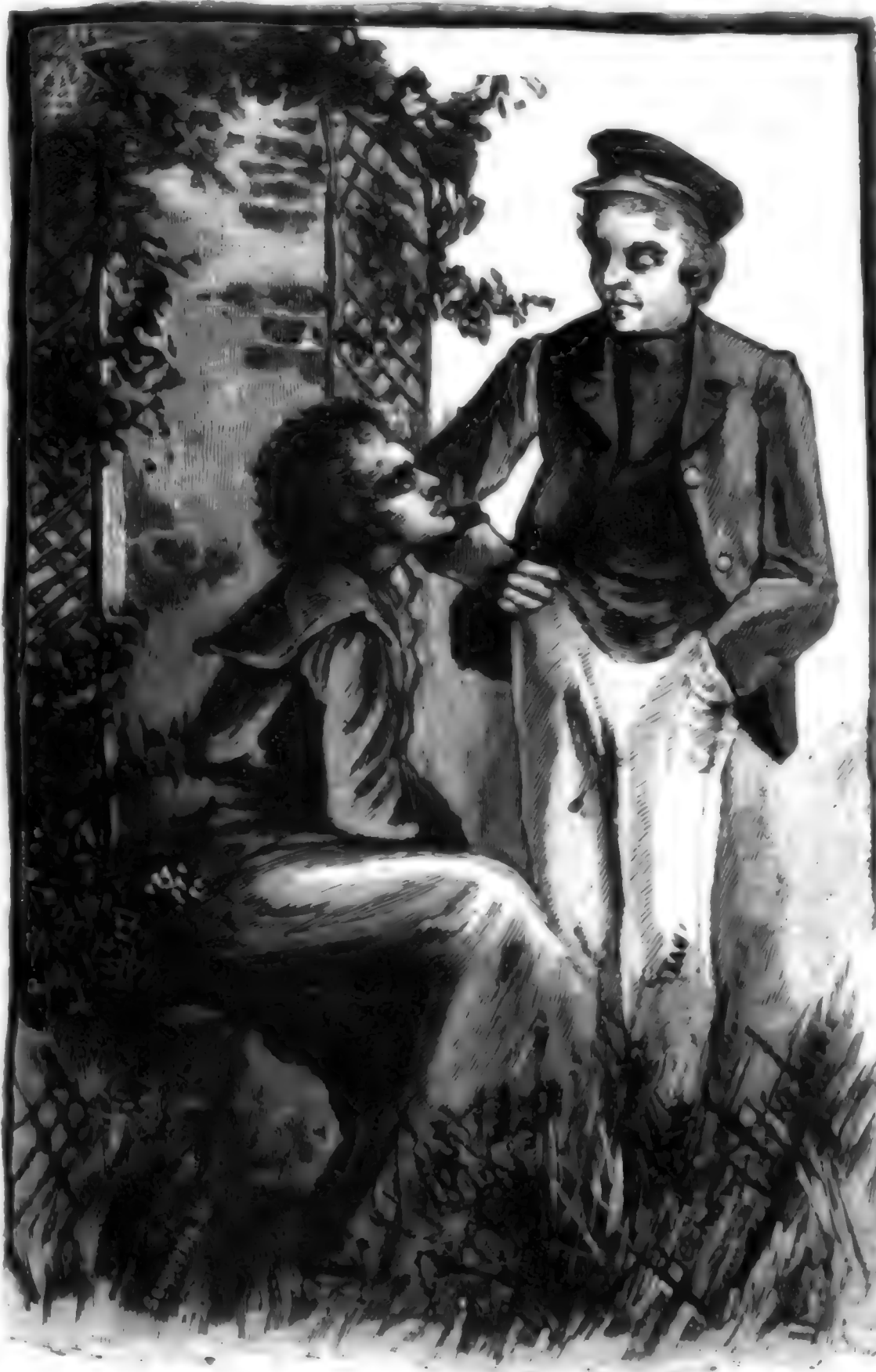
"Vuneral! Nod me! Dot vas hee's pee-siness! Nod much!"

"When's he coming for his revenge, anyhow? Is he going to keep us waiting all night?"

That was the last I heard. The Captain and his wife were ruined: and these gentlemen would claim partnership, unless my half of the sloop could be

got to sea before daylight. My shipmate must be saved—saved from this drunken brute, who had dared to swear at her; and, after gambling away all her property, had even offered to stake his rights as her husband in play with a swindling Jew.

To take her away from him would be a righteous act—happen what might, she



LOOKED EARNESTLY IN MY FACE.

would at least be saved from insult, from destitution, from despair. But, greatly as she hated this man, how could I dare insult her with such a proposal? Out in the wet, black, gas-flaring alley I fought the big battle of my life. To die for her sake seemed a little thing; but to save her husband! Must I rescue him from the ruin brought down by his own madness—save him and his goods, and give her back, to him? Yes, even that for her sweet sake! Again, my good angel kept me straight.

Whatever my intentions may have been in the past, never again had I any thought of revealing to her my real motive—love. From that moment onward I considered nothing but her safety and her honour. Once only I forgot my duty; and this writing shall set forth all the bitterness of my punishment.

I discovered the Captain drunk, made him insensible, and took him in a cab to the sloop. There I left him battened down in the cabin; and, having bribed the cabman to silence, drove on to the cottage. I had sad news to break to my shipmate, but she bore it bravely, had a good cry, and began to pack up. Leaving the cabman to help her, I went to my lawyer, told him my story, and asked him how Branksome's property could be kept out of the hands of Judas. "Give me power of attorney," he replied, "and I'll attach the premises, in your name, for debt. Then keep out of the way."

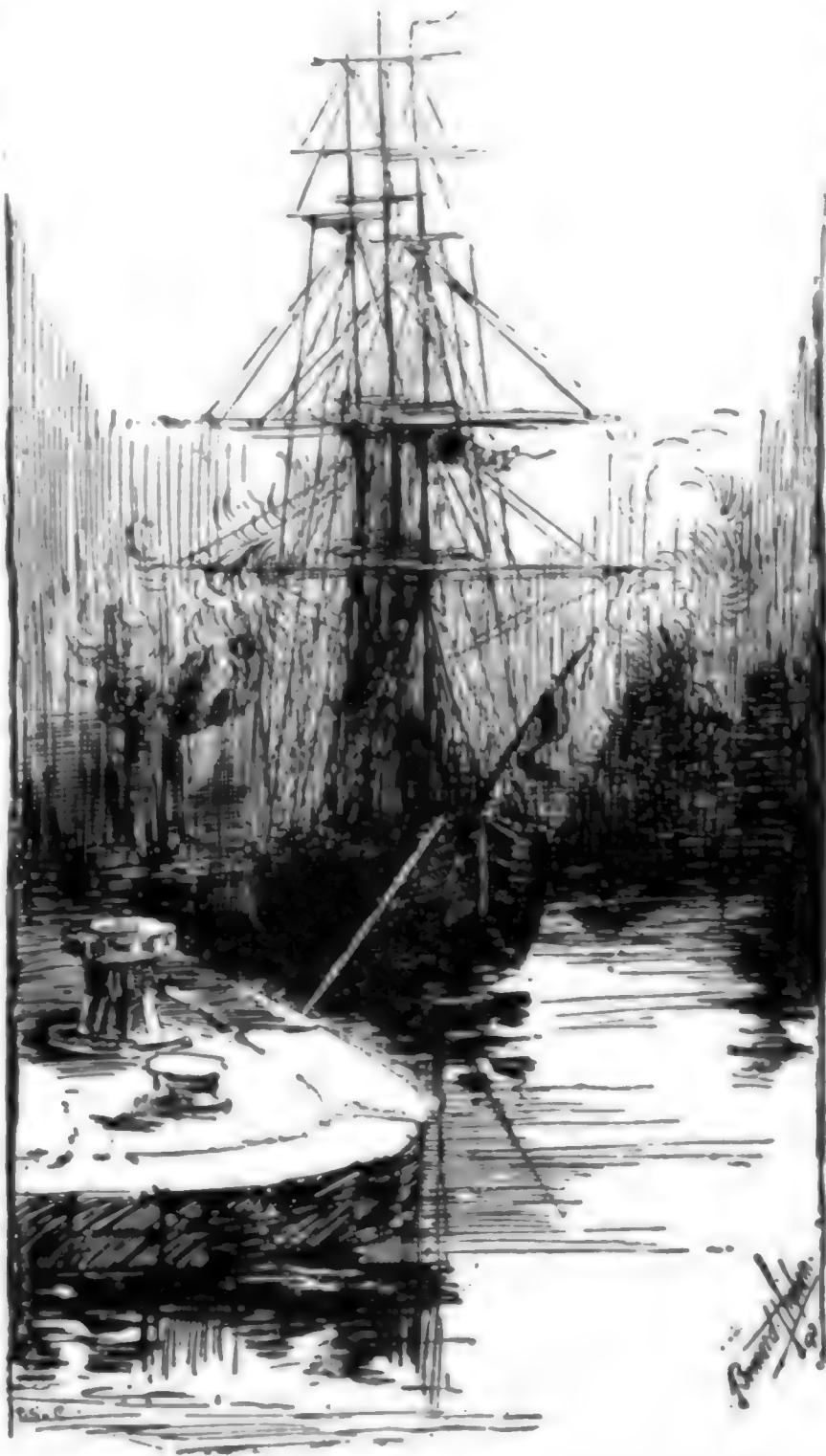
The one thing certain was, that the sloop must now be got ready for sea; and that secretly, for it was impossible to wait for a Custom House clearance. A lie procured me the

key of the dock gate; and, with the help of my brother Tom, who never ceased growling, but worked like a little demon, the loading of the sloop was in good time completed. In our haste a mistake was made: several barrels of oil being stowed on board that ought to have been left ashore.

There was a streak of light in the east when Kate appeared in the cab. She seemed in no hurry; and the delay was becoming serious. She was only roused, indeed, to a sense of the danger by the sudden and tumultuous arrival of Judas. Sending my hackman with his vehicle to block the way, I told Tom to get Kate and her luggage aboard while I cast off the hawsers. As five boats were available for our pursuit, we had to steal all their oars before we made fast our hawser to a sixth boat, and took the sloop in tow. We were barely a fathom

clear of the wharf when Kate put down the baby and went off into hysterics and awakened the Captain. We heard the smashing of glass, and a thin film of smoke came up from the after-hatch; for Branksome, in his frantic attempts to escape, had upset the lamp, and fired my bunk. By this time Judas was dancing along the wharf, abreast of us, anathematizing our ancestors, and cursing us, our heirs, executors and assigns, for ever. There was no time to comfort my shipmate or to help the Captain to put out the fire, for Tom and his boat had now to be dropped astern, before I could put up the jib, staysail and foresail, and take the helm.

The enemy had now aroused the town; and, as we glided out of har-



THE WHARF.

hour, we saw Judas, on our cabman's information, arrested for a breach of the peace.

CHAPTER III.

OUR tiny craft, poised on the mane of the sea, drenched with its diamond spray, seemed transformed into a trembling fabric of light by the kiss of the risen sun. We were gliding down the Straits of Fuca, nearing the great Sea Gate; on the one hand the dazzling heights of the Olympic mountains, on the other, the dark forests of Vancouver, looming from under the northward clouds. A lovely ideal; but we were tired out, cross as three bears, and in the throes of a disgraceful squabble. The Captain, on the verge of the horrors after his debauch, had looked so pitiful, that when I remarked bluntly that it served him right, Kate at once forgot all her wrongs and rallied to his defence. When my sweet shipmate took her husband's part I relapsed into silence. I had come between them, and disturbed their peace of mind, and had, moreover, brutally ill-treated Branksome.

I had attached his property, I had run away with the sloop, and an action should now bring down upon me the fullest penalty of the law. The sloop was put about and we beat up channel again. After all, if they chose to surrender all they had to Mr. Judas, it was no business of mine. Only I was sorry for her—my shipmate, who had trusted me, and made me want to be a better man.

Having triumphed over me, Branksome went below to refresh himself with a bottle of whiskey. Kate was at the helm, but so tired that I ventured to ask her to take some rest while I brought the sloop

into Victoria. I think she felt then that she had misunderstood me; for she thanked me with tears in her eyes and went below. By stooping, I could still see her, from where I stood, as she lay in the sleep of exhaustion with the little child nestled in her arms. Every tack was bringing us nearer to the place where all she had must be sacrificed to pay her husband's debts, whence she must go forth beggared, chained for life to a lunatic drunkard.



FELL INTO MY ARMS INSENSIBLE.

Ah, that was a long and bitter watch on deck for me!

At last, when I was busy making a tack, she awoke with a scream. Branksome, mad drunk, was trying to pour whiskey down the baby's throat. There was a terrible revulsion of feeling; for, drunk and absent, she had pitied him, had sorrowed for the shadow of sin that hung over a brave man's life; but now, for the first time, she realised the full meaning of his condition. He had become a thing too bestial even to look at. She rose to her feet, pushed him from her baby, and left him sprawling on the floor; then, with a low wail of misery, took up the child and came to me for help. Forgive? Help? Ay,

die for her if it were necessary. Yet, for the moment, I was at a loss what to do. To return to Victoria was to surrender everything to the sharpers; yet to change our course involved no little risk, for Branksome was not a man to be trifled with. First, at least, he must be silenced. I went below; let him call me names while I got a little medicine case out of my overcoat pocket, slipped a white pellet up my sleeve, then challenged him to drink. For fifteen minutes we sat swearing at each other over our glasses; then the opiate took effect, and Branksome fell asleep.

My shipmate and I lost no time in putting the sloop about, and heading her on our course down Channel. Leaving Kate at the helm, I prepared dinner, which we ate in silence. I could hardly keep awake during the meal; but, as soon as it was finished, returned to the helm, in order that Kate might attend to her baby.

Drowsily I watched her as she sat nursing the child, her face alight with love and tenderness. There was reverence, almost awe, in her manner, when the big, inscrutable blue eyes looked up into hers; but at last, blinded with tears, she clutched the tiny deity to her breast, and I knew, by her choking sobs, that she now regarded her child as fatherless.

CHAPTER IV.

I DREAMT that, looking astern, I saw the smoke of a steamer off Esquimalt Roads. This smoke appeared to come from the hat of Judas, and I began to hear the flap, flap, flap of his immense feet as they turned slowly round and propelled him down the straits in pursuit. He coaled up, using the Captain's cottage and garden for fuel, and came down to windward, swearing at my ancestors, and demanding my papers in the Queen's name.

Presently I woke up with a start, and found myself lying on the deck. Kate stood at the helm, for she had bravely taken my watch. We were running under a dangerous spread of canvas, before a rising wind, up the outer Coast of Vancouver Island. The Revenue steamer of my dream had become a grim reality, some four miles astern. I took the helm and considered the prospect, while Kate prepared supper.

Ahead there loomed in the distance what appeared to be a long, low headland: but Kate told me that this cape was separated from the mainland by a little channel, called the Needle's Eye, which, only passable at high tide, opened, to the northward into a spacious sound. Now, at the entrance of the Needle's Eye, behind a chain of reefs, there was good anchorage, and one could see from thence up the channel into a little cove. I asked Kate if she could pilot us through such water after dark. She turned white at the suggestion, then, looking astern, clenched her teeth, and said: "If I have to—yes."

I knew the steamer's captain, a man who would follow wherever I dared lead. Yet, if I could delay him an hour in the outer bay he would lose the tide—the channel would be impassable. But such a man could only be detained by the certainty of having us in his power. What if he saw the sloop's light riding in the inner cove?

Leaving Kate at the tiller, I emptied the water-cask that stood amidships. In the side of it was a square hole for the dipper. Through this I rammed the sharp end of a boat-hook, until the point entered the staves of the under side. I secured the staff with four stays of spun-yarn, and made the hole water-tight; then lashed the anchor light at the top. Kate left the tiller lashed, and we lit the lamp; passed a pair of butt slings round the cask, lifted it over the bows, hung it ready for letting go, weighted the under-side, unshackled a length of cable, and, passing it through the hawse-hole, secured it to the cask.

All was now ready.

Kate wet the sails—I took the tiller, and we drove on in the gathering darkness, straight for the Needle's Eye. We were now within range of the Revenue steamer, and she fired a shot over our heads as a suggestion to heave to.

Branksome, awakened by the noise, heaved a great sigh, and yelled at me from his bunk:

"What the devil's that?"

"Esquimalt batteries," said I, "at target practice. We're just entering Victoria Harbour."

"What? target practice at night, you infernal idiot."

"Breakers ahead!" yelled Kate from forward; "hard a-port!"

"What's that?" roared the Captain, anxious but too ill to stir.

"She says I'm nearly foul of the outer wharf, Captain. You'd better come on deck."

"Breakers on the starboard bow!" yelled Kate.

"Captain," said I, "she says the schooner, *Betsy Breakers*, is right in our berth. Why in thunder don't you come on deck?"

"Blamed if I do," replied the Captain.

As we glided into smooth water behind the reefs we heard "seven bells" strike on the steamer.

"What's that?" said Branksome.

"Cathedral clock," said I. "Can't you come and give us a hand?"

"Go to blazes!"

When we had passed the outer anchorage I let go the mainsail with a run, and called out that we were standing by to let go the anchor. As we neared the inner cove, I lashed the helm, and let go the fore and staysails, leaving only the little jib to keep her under way. Nothing but our light was now visible to the steamer as she passed the outer reefs.

"Stand by to let go," I roared for the Captain's benefit. "Let go all!" and with a splash and a rattle of chain the cask went overboard.

As we rounded the point and shut out the first bend of the channel, I had time to glance astern. Our anchor light rocked gently in the cove, and the steamer, now in the outer bay, was making all snug for the night. Her captain was confident that we were afraid of the Needle's Eye, and that we were caught at last.

We could now see the broad Sound ahead, and as we drove on under jib and staysail Kate gave me the difficult course with a silent wave of the arm. The Captain, confident that we were in Victoria Harbour, was getting ready, in a leisurely way, to go ashore. But the moment that the sloop was out of danger Kate came trembling aft. The strain had been too great, and the brave woman, who had taken us safely through the Needle's Eye at night, in a gale of wind, now lurched forward suddenly, and fell into my arms insensible.

I had not dared one word, one glance of love. Since I had resolved to save her, my adoration had only been self-torment, my life a terror of self-restraint lest voice or eyes should betray me. But now, in defiance of conscience and better judgment, I held her insensible body to my heart, and, in a moment of uncontrollable passion, bent down and kissed her.

I was startled by a harsh laugh.

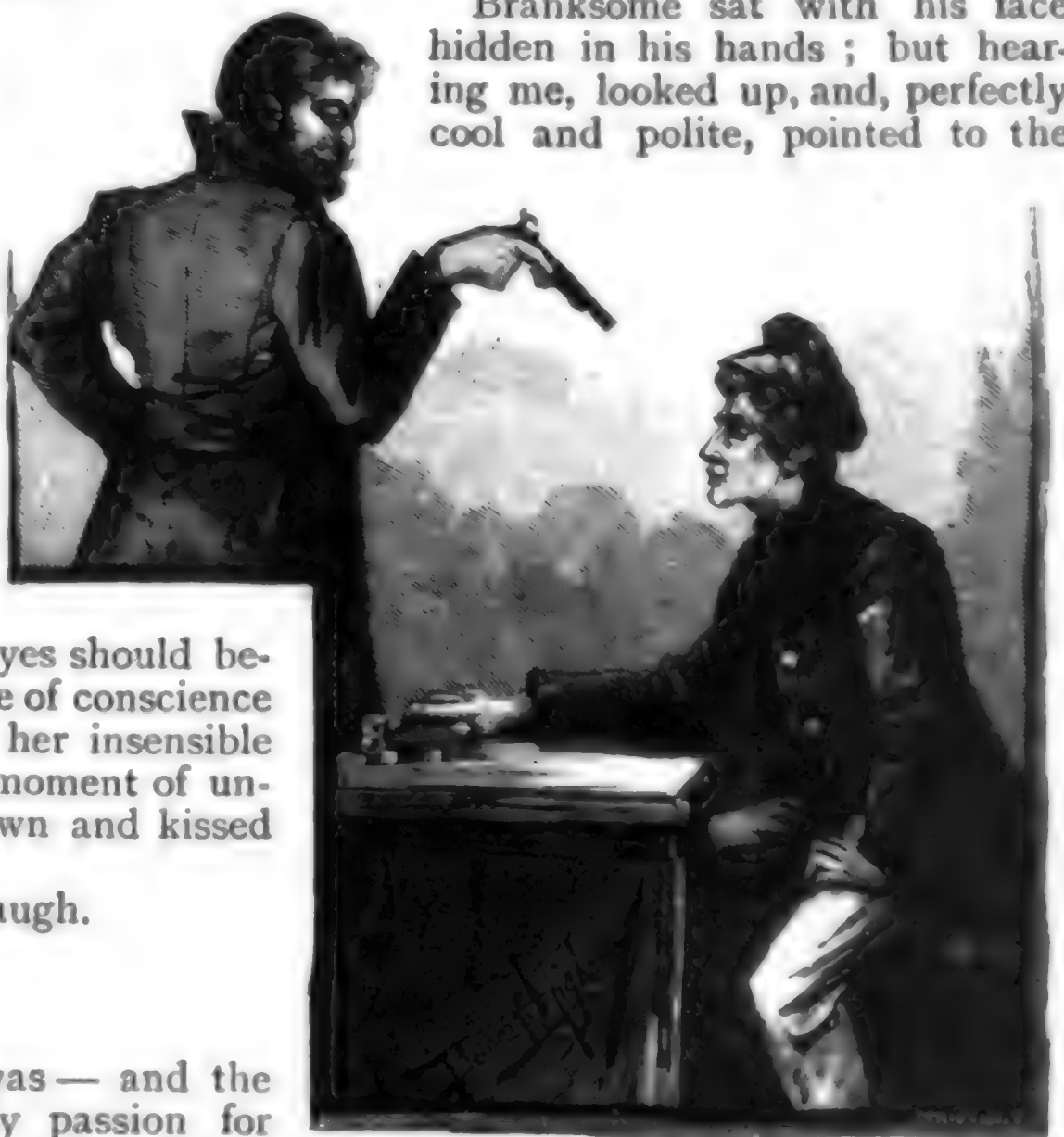
CHAPTER V.

I MAY have been bad — I was — and the best thing in me an unholy passion for another man's wife; but now that I was

found out I had at least the grace to be ashamed of myself. Even under the curse of drunkenness, Captain Branksome retained many of his finest qualities. I find it easy enough to assume a lofty contempt for his weakness, but I was never his equal in manliness and generosity. He ought to have shot me like a dog, but no—he looked all around into the darkness and realised how I had lied to him; he gazed hopelessly at Kate as she lay in my arms, then turned on his heel and went below. At the bottom step of the ladder he paused; and, looking back, said quietly, "Mr. Kendrick, when you've quite finished kissing my wife, be so good as to lash the helm, and join me."

It was better that she should remain asleep, so I laid her gently down upon the deck, then took a last breath of the sweet night air. As a condemned felon shrinks from death, so I held back from that interview. What a coward I felt as I wiped the sweat from my face, trying to invent excuses for delay; but at last, for very fear lest my hesitation should be noticed, I braced myself to face my punishment, and, leaving the sloop to drive on at her own will, went down into the cabin.

Branksome sat with his face hidden in his hands; but hearing me, looked up, and, perfectly cool and polite, pointed to the



AS HE ROSE AND TOOK AIM.

opposite seat. As I sat down, I noticed that rather than angry, he looked unspeakably tired and bored. His face was pale and haggard—it seemed that bitter trouble, not drunkenness, had brought his misery. For a moment I heard the water rippling astern; then, turning to a dice box and a revolver lying on the table between us, the Captain addressed me:

"I suppose you understand, Mr. Kendrick, that there is not room in this world for both of us. You're not afraid I hope?"

"Not the least!"

"Kindly examine these dice."

"I am satisfied."

"Highest throw has the first shot then."

"Agreed. We will shake hands and say good-bye, then throw—then fire."

He took no notice of my outstretched hand.

"Oblige me by throwing first, Mr. Kendrick," was all he said.

"Good-bye."

My hand never trembled as I held the dice. I was not afraid or very anxious—nor, indeed, had I any intention of shooting should the chance fall to me. Only in a blood-red mist I saw the white cubes, and counted—six—deuce—ace.

"Nine," muttered Branksome as he took the dice and threw. There, as it were floating in a circle, I read vaguely—six—five—four, and caught the click of Branksome's revolver as he rose and took aim. I heard the ripples lapping under the stern, the keen wind whistling aloft, the scuttle of rats underfoot, then the rustle of a skirt and a quiet laugh.

"Well, I must say you've a queer way of amusing yourselves. Is it nobody's watch on deck?"

"What are you doing down here?" roared the Captain. "Get on deck, or I'll blow your brains out!"

While he spoke we were hurled headlong against the bulkhead: a sea broke over the stern and deluged the cabin, and we were left in darkness. For a moment we felt the little craft scraping and grinding over the rocks; an instant later she was lifted clear of the reef, and we were carried on into deep water.

Branksome, cool, stern and commanding, broke the spell of our terror.

"Woman, take the helm and head for the nearest land! Mr. Kendrick, where are we?"

"Near the north end of the Needle's Eye, running north-west across the Sound."

"All right. Stand by to give me a hand with the staysail. We'll save *her* life anyway."

Having hoisted all the canvas we could carry, we unbent the staysail, bent a rope's-end to each of the cringles, and called Kate from the helm. Next we passed the canvas under the bowsprit, and the Captain, with a gaff, forced the sail under our cutwater, while Kate and I hauled on the ropes. It was a long job, but at last the canvas was sucked into the leaks, and, swelling as it soaked, nearly arrested the inflow of water.

Now that we had left the shelter of the land, we were running before a whole gale of wind; and, as the sound was fully exposed to the Pacific, pitching heavily on a high swell. Already there were two feet of water in the cabin. Kate was allowed to nurse the baby to sleep, I was ordered to the pump, and Branksome took the tiller. Greatly as the canvas impeded the flow of water, it soon became plain to all of us that my pumping was not going to save the sloop. We should have been making nine knots an hour, but our pace was barely three and the little craft laboured most painfully.

"Kate," said the skipper, "put that brat into the canoe and see to the paddles. Mr. Kendrick, some food and a beaker of water in the canoe. All ready? Then back to the pump; and, Kate, get a bucket and bail out the cabin. I see Mitlhton village ahead, and I'm going to put her ashore there—or sink." We took off our oilskins and gum boots, and put on life belts. Ahead there loomed the white line of the breakers, but it seemed doubtful that we should ever reach them, for the sloop was sinking. No longer was it possible to launch the canoes for now the rollers were surging about us on either side, and blinding spray was lashing along the deck. Still the tins craft, that we carried amidships, afforded some little shelter for the child. Kate bent over her baby as it slept, her arm stretched out to shield it from the spray, her dark hair blowing down the wind, her great eyes wild with fear—not for herself, but for her little one.

"Hold hard!" yelled Branksome from the helm; and Kate and I, with the canoe already lashed to the ring bolts, spared each a hand to protect the child.

The stern of the sloop lifted, a great white sea came roaring in pursuit; the livid foam flew past on either side, and we raced with Death into chaos. There was one smashing blow, as we struck, and the waters rolled down upon our heads. When the air cleared, and the surf had rolled away, we found that the sloop had broached to, and now lay broad-side to the sea. The foremast was gone by the board, the main-sheet had been carried away, the cabin hatch was gone, all the sails adrift; and yet the canoe was not lost. The little ark in which the child lay was safe.



HER GREAT EYES WILD WITH FEAR.

The waves that now broke over us only carried the wreck higher and higher up the beach; and as the tide was ebbing, did us little further injury. The force of the gale was already spent; the swell had begun to subside, and the water was pouring out of our leaks. Indeed, the summer night was too short to cause us much suffering, and we were too busy to feel the length of the hours. We made shift to get the stove lit and coffee prepared; and, thus refreshed, set to work cheerfully to clear away the wreck, and to dry our wet clothes and bedding by the fire. By sunrise the sea had gone down.

CHAPTER VI.

As soon as it was daylight we found that the wreck lay on the crest of a bar, while within was a small river and a perfectly-sheltered cove. Upon its sandy shore stood a forest of pines and cedars, that rose more than two hundred feet aloft, and shut in the harbour like an enormous wall. Immediately opposite to where we lay, a large Indian village stood out white against the darkness of the trees, its houses of one storey, with wide, low-gabled fronts, painted with

monstrous faces in red and black—the eyes windows, and each door a mouth, which slobbered dogs and dirty children from its wooden jaws. In front of the houses rose masts, crowded with grotesque figures; and at least a hundred canoes were hauled up out of reach of the tide. From the unusual number of these little craft—they were dug-outs, and beautifully modelled—we concluded that the neighbouring tribes had gathered to enjoy the hospi-

ality of this village during some great feast.

This village of Mitlthton had a very bad reputation. Two or three ships' crews had been overpowered and massacred near here in times past, and we knew that the savages were hungrily taking stock of our copper-bolted craft and her probable contents. To make a sign of distress was to have the sloop rifled and our throats cut; and, on any enquiry being made by the Government, the storm would be charged with the crime. So, when an old Indian came out in a canoe to see us, we were discovered, clean and tidy, enjoying our breakfast on deck.

Branksome said we had merely beached the sloop for repairs here in order to give this tribe a chance to earn some money. At the flood-tide next week large pay would be given for help in getting her afloat; and after that he would trade off most of the goods for furs. Meanwhile, he understood this to be a feast-day, and would be glad to contribute a case of whiskey to the day's sport.

The old man went away delighted with the big present; and all the morning drums were beating in the dance-house,

and we heard at times the solemn chants of some religious ceremony.

I lay on deck in the sun, watching Kate playing with her baby, and dreamed that it was Sunday or Easter Day, when all the fields are glad in the sunshine, and the trees are proud of their young leaves, and the murmur of the rivers is like the sound of prayer.

I think I heard the Captain busy down in the cabin with a bottle of spirits, and I could even distinguish the beat of the drums, the clapping of hands, the dismal music, of the poor savages ashore; but all this came to me with the lap of the waves and the scent of the pines, like some strange dream of distant isles and seas; and nothing seemed real but the tick of the parlour clock, the chime of the Easter bells, and the shouts of little children, as they played in the fields at home.

The voice of the woman I loved was crooning some sweet old hymn, and the music was flashing like the flight of white birds through the deep blue sky of my dream.

Ah me! I had aroused a hell of passion in my enemy, who was making himself mad with jealousy and drink—and I was indulging in a nap!

Was that the land breeze of a tropical dawn, or could it be her breath that stirred my hair? Had some bright creature brushed passed with fluttering wings, or did her hands caress me as I slept? Perchance some palm tree waved against the sun? or was it the shadow of her I loved that shut out the warmth of noon?

I awoke—opened my eyes, and saw her bending over me. I reached my arms to her as she started back—then reeled to the crash of a gun, so close that my hair was singed. I staggered to my feet with a stinging pain lashing across my forehead, and eyes suddenly blinded with the blood that streamed down my face.

I heard the roar of rage—I felt the rifle hurtling round my head; then Branksome was hurled away, and dashed, stunned, into the lee scupper.

Kate threw away the crowbar with which she had struck him down, and, with her handkerchief, wiped the blood from my face.

I knew that there was not a moment to spare; and now that I could see my way about, took hold of the canoe, and launched it over the side, while the Captain was trying to arouse himself from his

swoon. I received Kate and the baby into the canoe. He drew his revolver as I shoved off, and began firing at both of us; but shot so wide that there was very little danger. After the sixth shot, he flung the weapon after us, and we knew, by his roar of disappointed rage, that the man was left disarmed.

CHAPTER VII.

OUR canoe was very small, and to convey Kate to a place of safety, a larger one must be hired and an Indian crew. We could not have chosen a worse time for landing at the village. The Indians were just beginning the big function for which they had gathered. Little as I know of these people, I had often listened with disgust to descriptions of the ceremony, known to the whites as Dog Eating. It generally takes place in winter, and belongs properly to the more northerly tribes. It was the initiation to the secret Society of Doctors, wherein the candidates, after remaining several days in the woods, come naked and starving at the summons of the Faculty, and, to prove their competence as medical men, gorge themselves with raw dog. Under any conditions it is not a nice thing to see, and on this occasion, thanks to the Captain's gift of whiskey, the initiates and most of the chief people were drunk.

We stood waiting by the canoe, uncertain how to act. The medicine men, in ceremonial dresses, had come out of the chief's house; and, standing somewhat in advance of the crowd, began to chant the summons. There was something of wild pathos in the music—kindred to that of the pine trees and the sea; such melody as rings, strong and true, from the heart of nature. It was low tide, and all along the wide expanse of shingle no living creature was visible—only the priests chanting, and the people, awed and hushed, waiting for something to appear. Presently we became aware of three men crouching upon the beach at some distance, crouching in such a strange posture that we could hardly believe them to be human. Gradually they came nearer, hopping like toads, and crouching, then hopping again, little by little drawing near to the people. The doctors advanced, some of them took the initiates by the hand, and made them stand up; then the mob surged forward,

and surrounded the party. For a moment we observed that some malicious persons were plying the initiates with whiskey; then somebody shouted to them in a tone of derision, and pointed to where we stood. There was a quick response and a roar of laughter. Kate clutched my arm with a gasp of terror.

"What does it mean?" I asked.

"Oh God, have mercy!" she cried; "have mercy!"

The crowd was surging down to us, and, while I tried to launch the canoe, my blood ran cold. A savage had shouted to us in English:

"Take white man's baby!
White man's baby eat for dog!"

The naked initiates were in advance: eyes glaring, mouths foaming, arms reached out. Suddenly, the foremost rushed at Kate and wrenched the child from her arms. My revolver

was too late to save it, for though the man sprang in the air, mortally wounded, the child was dashed to the ground—dead. As Kate bent over the body, the second initiate tried to lay hold of her, and I blew his brains out. The third initiate I brought down wounded, and knocked a doctor on the head with the empty weapon.

Now that the ground was cumbered and the people had fallen back aghast, I dragged Kate away with her child, forced her into the canoe and shoved off. The Indians rushed forward, but we were already beyond their reach; and, by the time they had got their rifles and launched a few canoes, we were half way across the bay.

All was confusion ashore—the women screaming, doctors raving over the dead, and the people arming for the pursuit. We fled through a hail of bullets, but, as nobody seemed to think of taking aim, we were not much frightened. As we neared

the wreck, however, Branksome came up from the cabin. At least, I thought, we had one more on our side. But I was wrong. Instead of helping, the unfortunate man stood cursing us, and threatened instant death if we made any attempt to seek shelter on board. All hope of escape seemed cut off; and, in desperation, we had decided rather to seek shelter in the woods, than to be overhauled and shot in our canoe, when there was a terrible scream of agony from the wreck. A shot aimed at us from the village, had struck Branksome in the breast, and we saw him fall to the deck, mortally wounded.

Just then, the blast of a horn sounded along the shore; and the people, stayed from the pursuit by their chiefs, gathered in the houses to take counsel. We knew that there was little to hope from this delay; for, not only were the savages eager to plunder the sloop, but they were bound by the most solemn obligations to take a life in exchange for each of the men I had killed. As we clambered on board the wreck, our hearts were already chastened to resignation

by the utter certainty of death.

Kate vowed she would not leave the wreck while her husband lived; and when I proposed to rig the canoe with outriggers and float-bladders, so making her safe and buoyant for the three, she met me with a terrible stare. Unable to control the wrath that was consuming her, the unhappy mother cried:

"Have you forgotten my child?"

Her eyes had that hard, tired look of one distracted with pain; and her face was drawn and white, her movements slow and mechanical, as she forced her hands to do their duty to the dying man.



HE BEGAN FIRING AT BOTH OF US.

She seemed indifferent to the blood that defiled his clothes; and with the cool deliberation and skill of a surgeon, stanching the outward flow of the wound. He lingered for hours, but never fully recovered consciousness.

As I looked at that still, wan face, my thoughts went back to the day when first I met him—strong, bronzed, manly, yet with that uncertain glance that had given so strange a fascination to his eyes. I understood it now—the indirect glance was caused by self-suspicion, by brooding fear of uncontrollable passion that haunts the hereditary drunkard. At last I realised what floodgates I had opened, and what foul fiends I had let loose when I made him distrust his wife.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROVIDED that we remained on board, the Indians, although watching us closely, were not likely to attack before night. Why should they hurry—what hope could two have against five hundred?

Suddenly the thought occurred to me that the oil, which we had shipped by mistake at Victoria, might now be used as a terrible weapon against the savages. Does oil burn on water? I was not sure, but at least the experiment was worth trying. I tapped one of the casks, half filled a teacup with water, and poured in a little oil. I

went below, laid a match on the surface, and set fire to it. For a moment the match nearly went out; then the oil caught, the flames leaped over a foot high, burned for several minutes, crackled, died out, and left the water boiling. After all, there was still a chance left that we two might, in extremity,

be more than a match for the five hundred!

The light was fading out of the west when Branksome died. Clouds like dragons were coming up from the sea, vague and terrible against the starry glory of the night. Horror filled the darkness around me, and the sickening apprehension of blood. We were in terrible danger—we the living, watching beside the dead! The silence was too horrible for endurance, and I aroused Kate from her husband's body, where she lay.

"Yes, we must get the canoe ready," she said.

"That won't save us. The Indians have watchmen on both headlands. The alarm would be given the moment we dipped our paddles."

"Shall we kill ourselves then—or just wait?"

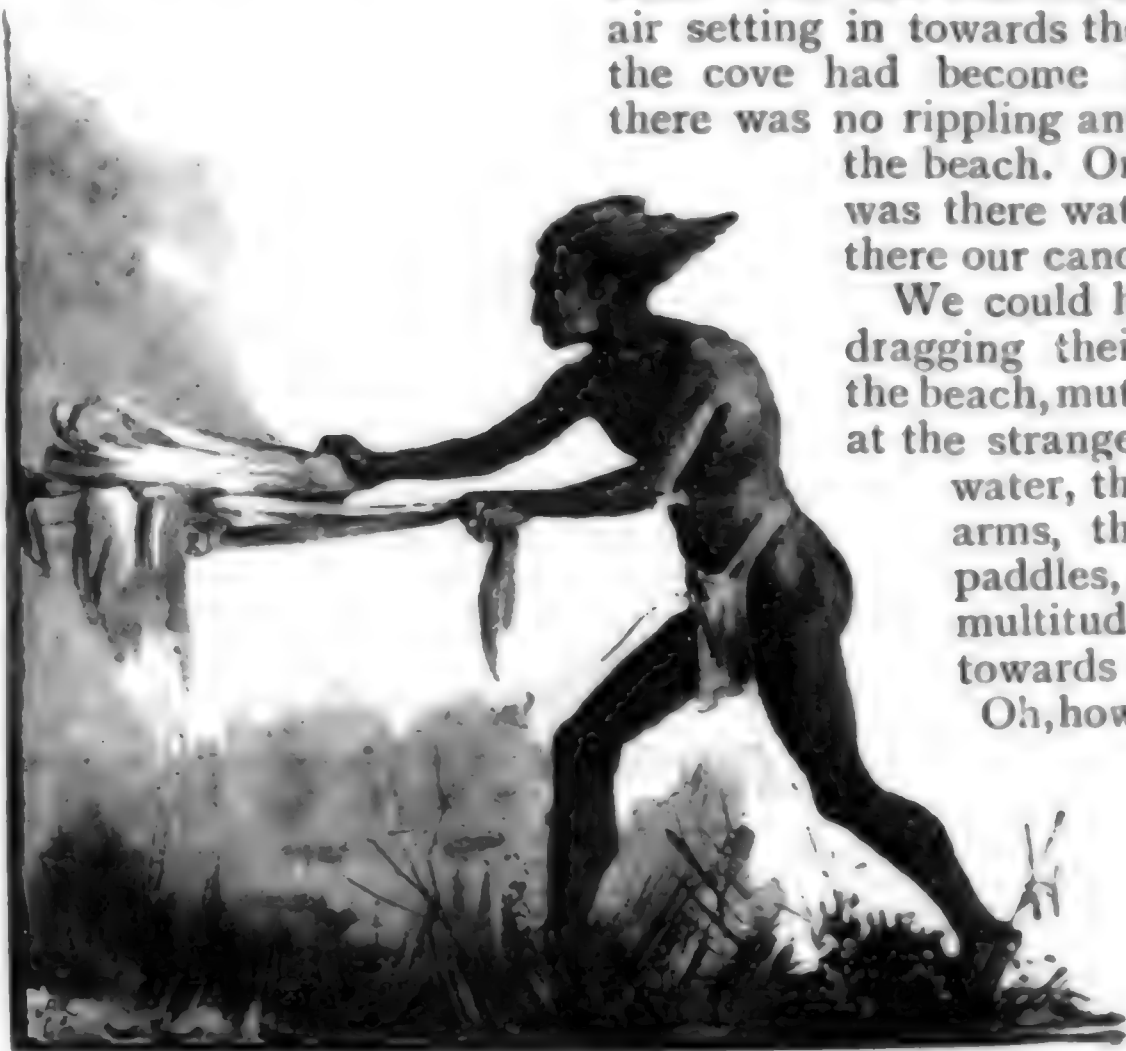
"There's no need, Kate. Come, I want help."

We rigged a tackle and got the oil casks on deck. The tide was low, and although there was water under our lee towards the village, the sandspit to windward was dry. I lowered myself into the canoe, and crept round with it to the windward side of the spit. Instantly the alarm sounded.

In haste Kate broached the casks and flooded the bay with oil. One of them I filled with kindling wood soaked in kerosene. The tide was already rising, a light air setting in towards the land—already the cove had become like glass—and there was no rippling any longer against the beach. Only to windward was there water lapping, and there our canoe lay waiting.

We could hear the Indians dragging their canoes down the beach, muttered comments at the strange stillness of the water, the rattle of firearms, then the dip of paddles, and the doomed multitude came gliding towards our light.

Oh, how we longed to be able to give them some chance! but no—what warning would they listen to from us? A



WRENCHED THE CHILD FROM HER ARMS.

derisive laugh and the dipping of paddles again—that would be all. In a low, strained voice Kate was pleading for them.

"I wanted to avenge my child," she said, "but oh! that I could leave it to Heaven—Come, let's take our chance in the canoe!"

I seized her by the wrists. "No, it's too late; you'd give your life to save your enemies—but *you shall not die!*"

I struck a match, lit the barrel of kindling wood, and dropped it into the oil. For a moment, the fire nearly went out, the foremost canoes were already touching the wreck, the men in the bows making ready for the leap aboard, and brandished knives were gleaming in the starlight.

Kate lifted up her hands, and cried aloud in the silence:

"Oh God, have mercy upon them!"

A scream rent the night like a sword, and lightning shot along the bay. Long, hungry tongues of flame were crawling through the gloom; a terrible glare was spreading far and wide, a hot, dry breath already scorched our throats; then, the roaring, leaping horror blazed up to Heaven, and the people fled burning through a sea of fire.

I saw their dark forms writhing against the intolerable light. Doctors standing in the canoes, screaming out frantic imprecations: fearless men, who bent at their crackling paddles as they shot their stout craft through the flames; canoes hurtling together in the central creek, so that some spilt their loads of savages overboard, to drown and burn in the bay;



LOOKED OUT THROUGH THE PRETTY WHITE CURTAINS.

and some, alas, drooped, hung down their scorched heads, then fell suffocated across the thwarts.

It was not all massacre. I have wounds to show—good honest wounds that have wrecked my body more than the wear of forty years—for a swarm of savages had gained the wreck and there I did battle with them

for life while Kate loaded the guns. The bulwark forward, was in flames, and the fire drove the Indians step by step aft, while I gave way, and slowly gained the stern. I had a brace of Colt's revolvers and a steady hand. The Indians fought with old shot guns and flint locks; and before they realised that I was the better armed, I had covered the deck with their dead.

The lee of the sloop was now aflame fore and aft; but up on the weather side, in suffocating smoke and heat infernal, I held the stern until Kate dropped to the sand. The Indians threw their useless guns aside, and came down, yelling, with brandished knives. I emptied my last charges into the midst of them, slung my weapons at the smoke and jumped overboard. Kate dragged me into the canoe, and I aroused myself for the last terrible struggle. Six men had gained the sand-spit, and now waded and swam in pursuit as we turned for flight; now hand to hand, knife to knife, I fought with them from the rocking stern of the canoe. My arm was wrung with a bullet wound, and the knife, my last defence, fell.

I took up the weapon left-handed, and hacked clumsily at the two last hands that clung to the gunwale. The knife dropped

into the water—the hands were gone—then I looked up and found we were alone.

The sloop was all ablaze, but the oil on the cove beyond was spluttering violently, and ready to go out. The smouldering wreck of canoes, the blackened bodies that sprawled over their gunwales, and a crimson streak of blood that defiled the copper sheathing of the wreck alone remained to attest our awful victory.

The women, children, old men of the village, and even many men from the canoes must have escaped to the woods—surely they could not all have perished! Kate says that at that time, she saw the village blazing from end to end, the forest burning to heaven, and reaching long arms of flame into the sky; the dragon clouds crawling above appeared to be on fire, all steeped in golden light and bloody shadows, as they hung glaring over the village and the wreck, and the scorched and blackened dead. But as for me, I saw nothing of all this, for I had received many wounds, and lost more blood than it was safe to part with. Kate says that I came and kissed her hand when it was all finished; and that afterwards she knew by the movement of my lips that I was praying.

* * * * *

I smelt the geraniums and the musk; I heard the bees droning about the room, and looked out through pretty white curtains down the Alberni Fjord. Little clouds were racing overhead—child clouds they seemed, at play; and on the deep blue waters the waves were like white horses running down the wind. I was too weak to turn my head, but I felt that Kate was sitting by my bedside. I believe she was making a bungling attempt to sew, but oh! her hands were so worn and thin and white—those strong hands that had grasped the helm, and

tugged at the halyards out on the deep sea!

I whispered to her, "How did we get here, Kate?"

"I paddled you," she said. "It only took a few hours. We're at my uncle's house in Alberni."

"Didn't it make you ill?"

"Yes; but I'm getting round nicely now. Be good and rest, or the doctor'll catch you talking."

"All right, shipmate!" and I fell asleep.

CHAPTER IX.

THAT is many long years ago, and now I am an old fool instead of a young one. Kate was not easily won—said I would never cherish cheap love, and sent me off to sea. Ten years I worked for her, and at last came with my own ship into port, and asked her to take command. My bride's hair was grey with long waiting, her hands worn with hard work; but her eyes were still as blue as the deep sea, and she was becoming—as may befall one pretty girl in a thousand—a beautiful old woman. No children were given to us—for what could bind closer an union such as ours?—but Kate has adopted my whole ship's company, and I must say they don't deserve it. If ever I'm too rough with the men, she comes between my temper and me; and with wonderful self-denial, never asks questions while I'm busy on deck.

Many a long watch we pass on deck together, talking in whispers of the things we did that awful night. Soon we shall be moored in the Last Anchorage, and our Owner will call us to account; and sometimes I grow cold with fear when I think of the reckoning that must be made for blood, but her arms are about my neck, her breath is warm on my face, and her eyes are brave with love when she says we shall be forgiven.



THE LONDON IRISH



OFFICER, 1860.

THE London Irish, or old 28th Middlesex Rifles, was raised early in 1860, as a result of a general meeting of the Irish residents in London, held on December 5th, 1859. The meeting, which was a most influential one, resolved to form a corps—the qualification for membership being a connection with Ireland by birth, marriage or property—under the title of the London Irish Volunteers. The following appeal was addressed to the ‘Irish residents in London’:

That a volunteer rifle corps be at once organised, according to the provisions of the Act 44 George III. cap. 54, under the title of the London Irish Rifle Volunteers, the qualification for membership being a connection with Ireland by birth, marriage or property; and that the corps shall consist of effective and honorary members. With a view to give more extended effect to the above resolution, the Executive Council of the London Irish Rifle Volunteer Corps beg most respect-

fully to address their fellow-countrymen resident in London, and appeal to them on behalf of the corps which they have the honour to represent. To some, it may possibly be matter of doubt as to the expediency of raising such a corps in the Metropolis. To others, the utility of the volunteer movement itself may be questionable. It is not the province of this Council to reply to either class of objectors. It is enough for them to know that,



PRIVATE, 1860.



COLONEL WARD, C.B.
Photo. by Samuel A. Walker.

in accordance with the wishes of a number of highly-influential Irishmen, of all creeds and politics, as expressed in the unanimously-adopted resolution of a public meeting, a corps has been organised and is making steady progress, and testifying, by its strikingly soldierlike qualities, to the peculiar aptitude of Irishmen for military pursuits. But earnest as are the efforts of those who are deeply interested in the success of the national movement, those efforts still lack, if not the sympathy, at least the active co-operation of many Irish residents in this great city. Yet the list of honorary members proves how warmly the nobility and many of the gentry of Ireland have responded to the appeal made to their patriotism; whilst the list of effective members of the corps shows how proudly the young Irishmen of London are meeting the call to arm—not for aggression, but for defence. Those lists the Council would respectfully, but urgently ask the Irishmen of London, not yet enrolled as members, speedily to enlarge, and thus prove their readiness to unite with their fellow countrymen in a movement of no common moment, even as regards *Irish* as distinct, if such they can be held, from Imperial interests—a movement bringing into accord elements too long discordant, and happily uniting, in and for one com-

mon and patriotic object, Irishmen of every class and creed and of whatever political opinions. Such a union, rare in our nation's history, this Council are strenuously promoting. They would appeal to your patriotism to help them; and by your sympathy, your money and your personal exertions, as honorary or effective members, to make the London Irish Volunteer Corps the pride of their countrymen here—the boast of their countrymen in Ireland.

Signed on behalf of the Council,
DONEGALL,
Commandant and President.
17, St. John Street, Adelphi,
March 23rd, 1860.

This circular was responded to with the greatest enthusiasm—large sums of money were subscribed, and enrolments were rapidly made.

In the following February the authorities accepted the services of the corps, as such, and as a battalion three months later, when the Marquis of Donegall was gazetted as Commandant. As a matter of fact, the Marquis of Conyngham was the first commandant, but, after a short service, he tendered his resignation in favour of the Marquis of Donegall. In 1860, which is really the year from which we have to date the birth of the regiment, we find the following officers in command: Captain Commandant, Lord Donegall;



Photo. by]

COLONEL LLOYD. [Russell and Sons.

Major, J. E. Verner; Captains, Lord Otho FitzGerald, Ward and Lord Ashley; Lieutenants, Clanchy, Russell, Lord F. Conyngham and J. S. Purcell; Ensigns, R. Gilbey and H. F. Edmunds; Adjutant, F. S. Daubeney; Surgeon, W. O'Connor, M.D.; Chaplains, Rev. R. H. Atherton (Protestant) and the Rev. J. C. Talbot (Roman Catholic). The first headquarters were in John Street, Adelphi, while "Hungerford Hall" was taken for drill purposes, three days a week, from four to ten p.m., at a rent of £1 per week.

The first uniform was grey, with green facings, and for head gear the old-fashioned

shako bearing a bunch of cock's feathers. During the year 1861 the London Irish made most satisfactory progress. A rifle range was taken, prizes for shooting competitions were presented to the corps, and the regiment played an important part in a big volunteer review held at Wimbledon.

They were inspected in Hyde Park

by Colonel McMurdo, who was highly pleased with the steadiness and precision with which they executed their movements, frequently exclaiming, "Excellent; well done, well done!" At the Floral Hall, Covent Garden, they assembled for inspection by their beloved Commandant, the Marquis of Donegall. In the course of his address to the corps on that occasion, he remarked, "There exists little doubt that the London Irish will rank among the first (volunteer regiments) and be second to none. His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge has honoured the Benevolent Society of Saint Patrick, by presiding at the festival dinner in aid of

the funds of that Society, and the regiment will provide a guard of honour to attend on his Royal Highness on that occasion." But in 1862 the London Irish passed through an unpleasant crisis. Their numbers fell off considerably, and altogether the regiment appears to have been in a bad way. Of five hundred and nine enrolled members, only one hundred and thirteen paid up that year. At the Saturday parades the attendance ranged from forty to eighty men.

In a leading article in the *Morning Star* (a paper which no longer shines in the journalistic constellation) we find the following

extraordinary passage, in allusion to the threatened French invasion: "The probability of an invasion by the French colonels at the head of the Zouaves was openly affirmed and unequivocally countenanced by men high in office, who were supposed to know something of the matter. In a word, there was a pro-



H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.

spect of some downright good fighting, and the nature of the Irishman, on the well-known principle that we are all inclined to believe in what we desire, led him, perhaps, to take more sanguine views of the probability than others did. What wonder, then, that a corps of London Irish Rifles sprang into existence as well as of London Scottish? The motive is as intelligible as it was powerful. The chance of having something to do in the way of real warfare operations was an allurements not to be resisted, and for a time the London Irish, buoyed up with this bright hope, assembled weekly in force, drilled, marched and administered

the affairs of the corps like men engaged in earnest work. But, lo, a change has come over the spirit of popular opinion on the subject of invasion. The Emperor of the French has continued obdurately friendly. He has ordered no transports to be constructed; he has formed no camp at Boulogne. The *Moniteur* is uniformly civil and ever polite towards England. The provocations of Lord Palmerston have been quite incapable of disturbing the serene amity of Napoleon. Irishmen, whatever anyone may say to the contrary, are excellent reasoners; and as they are known to excel in quickness of apprehension and rapidity of conclusion, they have, no doubt, detected the real state of the case. They see that France means to maintain peace with England. Probably many of the London Irish have begun to think that nothing else was ever meant, and that they were taken in. Even if inclined to believe what is now alleged, that it is to the imposing character of the volunteer force we owe these peaceable intentions of the Emperor, yet that is nothing to the purpose. When the London Irish enrolled themselves, they enrolled themselves to fight, not to prevent fighting. No man in his senses could believe that five hundred or six hundred Irish gentlemen would go to so much trouble for the preposterous purpose of keeping the peace. So, now that it appears plainly enough there is to be no fighting, the corps is rationally and quite naturally breaking up."

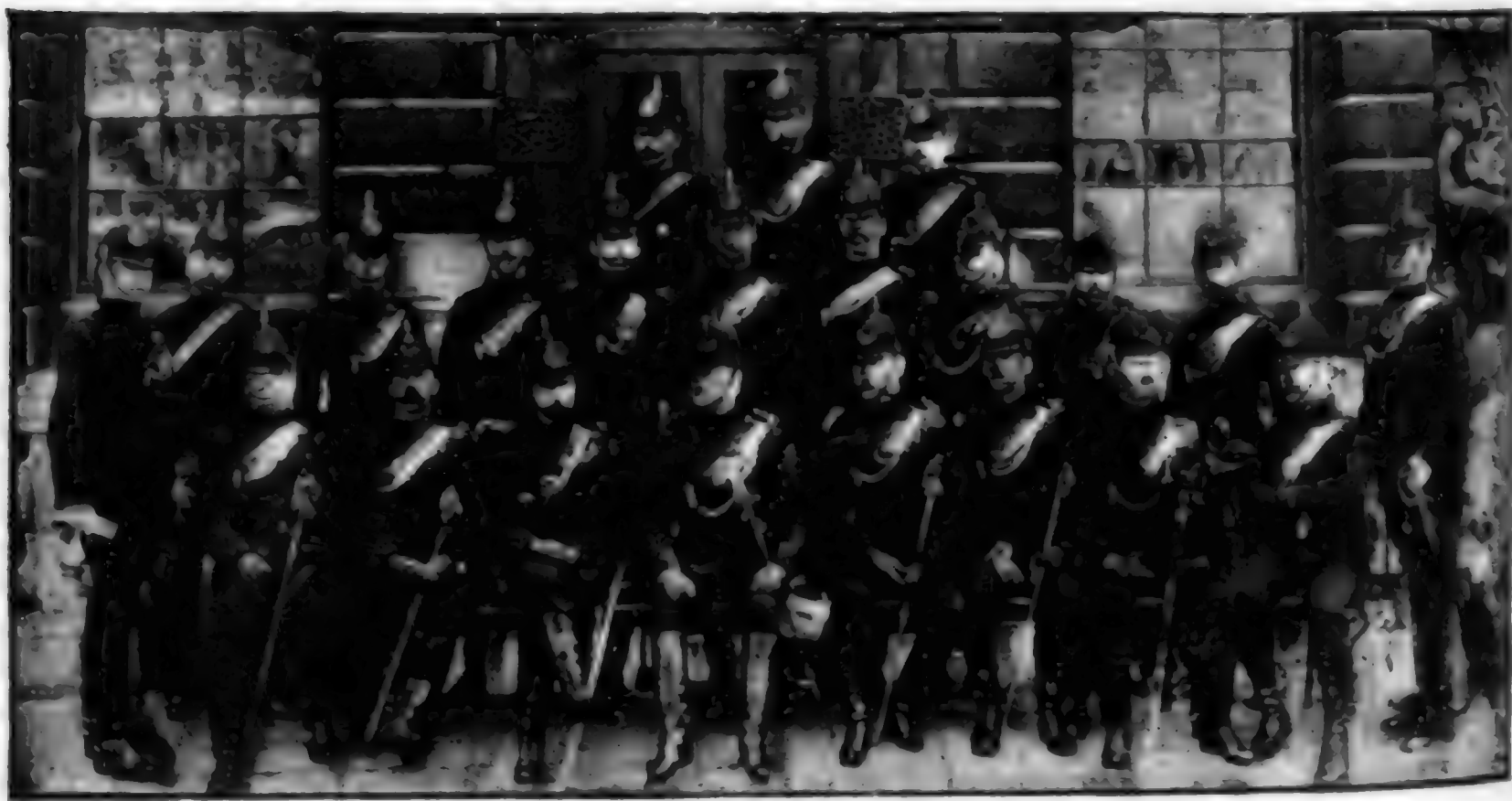
That the dismal prophecy contained in

this ridiculous article has never been fulfilled, has been amply proved by the gallant London Irish. With journalistic inconsistency, we find in one paper the blame laid to the Irish spirit animating the regiment. While in another, the *Univers*, we have a writer trying to impress his readers that the London Irish are not Irishmen at all.

We cannot do better than give a quotation from the leading article which expounds this extraordinary theory.

"The London Irish corps is a sham. . . . We decidedly object to their assumption of the title 'Irish' in any form. It is a sort of novelty in fraudulent pretences to hear of men born in Midlothian or the fens of Lincolnshire, wearing buttons on their uniforms engraved with the legend, 'Irish Volunteers.' . . . We hope the Marquis of Donegall (who is a most liberal nobleman) will look to this. He should restrict his levies to men of Irish birth or breed, or cease calling them by their present name. We have heard of one instance only, in which we can make allowance for the admission of a man not Irish. A gentleman made application to join. The customary formal question, 'Are you Irish?' was put to him. 'No,' he answered, with a twinkle in his eye. 'Not exactly, but I have a couple of dozen of Kinahan's L L in my cellar.'"

It is not our intention to go into the real cause of the trouble in 1862; suffice to say that the London Irish rose superior to all unfair criticism, and to-day rank as one of our most distinguished volunteer corps



THE OFFICERS.

enjoying unbounded popularity with Englishmen, Scotchmen and Irishmen alike. Their loyalty has never been doubted. In 1868, during the Fenian scare, five hundred were sworn in as special constables. The Marquis of Donegall ordered the men to parade at Somerset House, in uniform without arms, for the purpose of marching to some convenient place to be sworn in. The royal parish of St. Martin's, in the City of Westminster, was ap-



RUGLER-MAJOR M. MULHALL. QUARTER-MASTER SERGEANT H. WHITE.
SERGEANT MAJOR G. REYNOLDS.

propriately selected. The Marquis of Donegall was not present, but he was represented by Major Ward, now the respected Commandant. On reaching the St. Martin's School Rooms, Mr. Flowers, the well-known Bow Street magistrate, assisted by other justices, was present in readiness to swear in all who presented themselves, with the result that upwards of five hundred were sworn, and the corps, having been supplied with truncheons and striped crimson and white armlets, the colours of the City of Westminster, again fell in behind their band, and marched back to Somerset House, where they were dismissed. In 1871 the Duke of Connaught, then Prince Arthur, accepted the honorary Colonelcy of the "London Irish." This was accepted as a graceful compliment to the sister isle.

For various reasons, among others his somewhat Milesian Christian names, Prince Arthur Patrick, Duke of Connaught, has been, in popular fancy, more associated with Ireland, than any other of our Queen's sons, and nothing is more desirable than that the association should be strengthened. We hope then that the

identification of the Duke of Connaught with the London Irish, will be but the precursor of very decided advantage towards the Irish, not alone in London, but in their native country.

In July, 1871, the Duke met his regiment for the first time since his appointment as honorary colonel at an inspection at Wimbledon. In the course of his address to the regiment, His Royal Highness said, "That it gave him much pleasure to accept the Colonelcy of the Irish Volun-

teers, and that he was well aware that the corps had gained a high position in the Metropolis for smartness and efficiency. He reminded them that his name was Patrick as well as Arthur, and that he believed himself to be a genuine and true Irishman. It was because of its nationality, therefore, that he was doubly proud of being placed at the head of the Irish Regiment." The Prince subsequently marched past the inspecting officer, the Duke of Cambridge, at the head of the Irish Volunteers. In March, 1879, the occasion of the marriage of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, the officers presented His Royal Highness with a table centre-piece of bog oak and silver, the names of the officers being engraved thereon. Colonel Ward in presenting the testimonial to the Duke, said, "Your Royal Highness, on behalf of Colonel the Marquis of Donegall and the officers of the London Irish Rifles, of which regiment your Royal Highness has been Honorary Colonel during a period of eight years, we have the honour to request your acceptance of this piece of plate in testimony of our

sincere regard, esteem and affection. You have won the golden opinion of every member of the regiment, of every inhabitant of the Emerald Isle, of every subject in our beloved Queen's vast dominions, and we feel convinced Her Royal Highness the Princess Marguerite of Prussia has the certainty of a bright and happy future. Your Royal Highness, with the greatest respect and loyalty, the utmost sincerity, and from the innermost recesses of our hearts we wish you health, long life and happiness." The Duke of Connaught said "He could hardly find words to express his gratification at receiving so handsome a centre-piece from the officers of a regiment of his connection with

Militia, to which he was gazetted lieutenant in 1857; the regiment having a short time previously been embodied for service in consequence of the Indian Mutiny. The Royal North Lincoln was quartered successively in Portsmouth, Portland and other garrison towns in England, and afterwards in Dublin, Waterford, the Curragh and other places in Ireland. He was promoted to captain, in August, 1858; with this rank he returned with his regiment to England at the termination of the mutiny, when it was disembodied. While still holding his commission in the North Lincoln Militia, Captain Ward was, in 1860, offered a captaincy in the London Irish Rifles, which had then only been a few



THE STAFF.

which he was so proud; he was very much touched by the graceful remarks in reference to the Princess, made by Colonel Ward in presenting the testimonial, and he charged Colonel Ward to express to the Marquis of Donegall his high appreciation of their kindness towards him. He should always value their present very highly, and hoped his connection with the regiment would long continue." On the occasion of the Royal marriage, the Queen paid a high compliment to the regiment, specially commanding Colonel Ward to be present at the ceremony. Colonel Ward is certainly one of the most popular commandants in the volunteer service. He received his first commission in the Royal North Lincoln

months in existence, and was commanded by the Marquis of Donegall. For the next seven years Captain Ward devoted himself to the duties of a volunteer officer. In 1867 a majority was conferred on him, and in the following year he was transferred from the North Lincoln to the Queen's Royal Antrim Militia, and continued to hold both commissions for several years. A royal warrant was issued against the holding of dual commissions, when Major Ward agreed to resign his Militia appointment, and remain with the London Irish, in which regiment he was shortly appointed Lieutenant Colonel. Owing to the infirm health and advanced age of Lord Donegall, Colonel Ward was practically commander



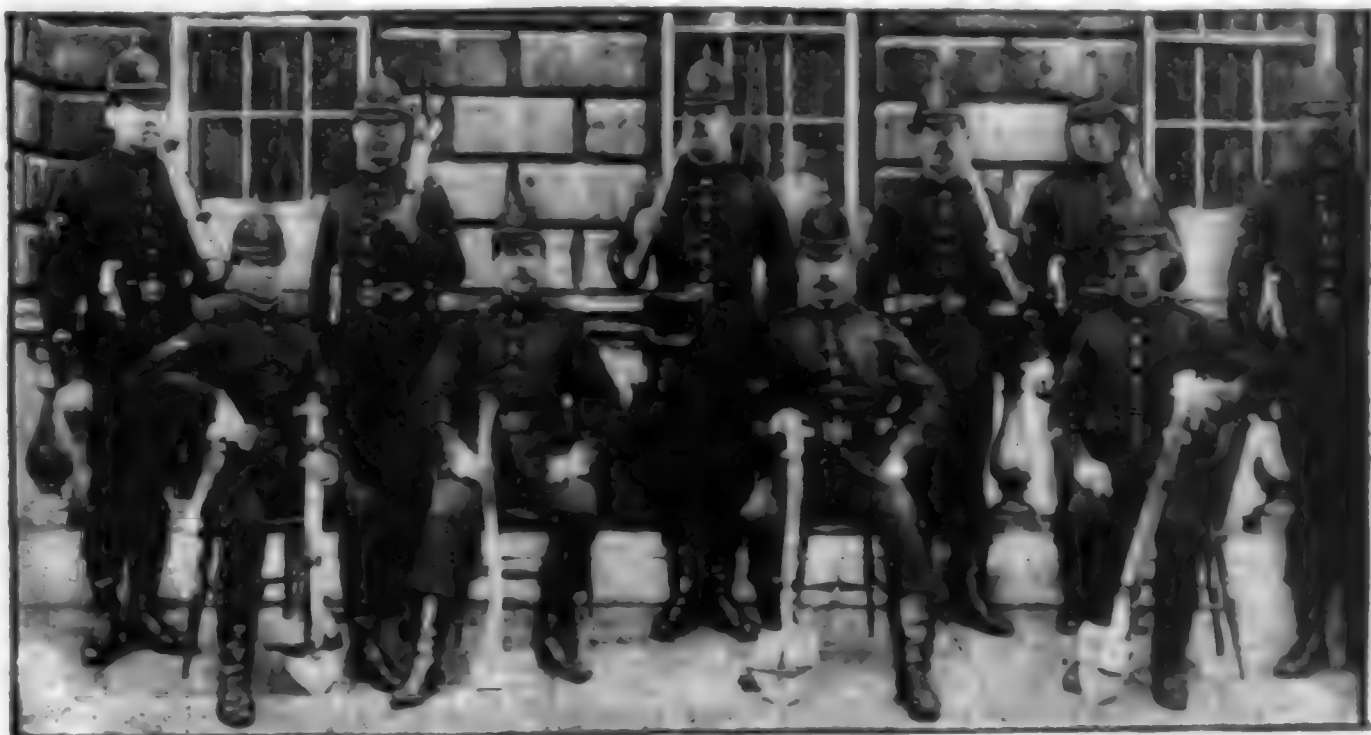
THE AMBULANCE CORPS.

of the regiment from the date of his appointment — the Marquis's connection being little more than nominal for many years. On the retirement of the above nobleman, in 1881, the subject of our present sketch became Colonel Commandant, and was shortly afterwards advanced to the rank of full colonel. Colonel Ward has always been adverse to the now obsolete practice of massing large bodies of volunteers for field-day purposes at Easter and other similar occasions. Ten years ago, speaking at the annual prize distribution of his corps, and referring to this subject, he said, "There is little or no military information gained, and unless they are taken up and organised by the authorities at the War Office, and the volunteers are amalgamated with the regular troops, we would be quite as well spending a happy holiday elsewhere." It is needless to allude to the change which has taken place during the last decade with regard to this matter.

The news of the death of the Marquis of Donegall, which occurred on the 19th October, 1883, was received with profound sorrow by the whole regiment, and the following regimental order was issued:

"With heart-felt sorrow the Commanding Officer records the decease of Colonel the Marquis of Donegall, who, during a period or more than twenty years, had been the Commandant of the London Irish Rifles, and by whose indefatigable zeal the regiment attained the highest state of efficiency. By the present and former members, who cheerfully contributed their valuable aid to him in his devotion to the interests of the regiment, and who know his kind and noble heart, his loss will be deeply felt, and they will ever remember, with feelings of pride and pleasure, the time they served under their universally esteemed commandant, the Marquis of Donegall. During the ensuing drill season officers in uniform will wear a piece of black crape round the left arm, and above the elbow. October 19th, 1883. J. Ward, Colonel."

Many distinguished names appear in



A GROUP OF PIONEERS.

the records of the London Irish, and it is worthy of note that the late Lord Palmerston was a member of the corps. The regiment has taken part in many important events since its formation. It would be useless to attempt an account of the different reviews, field-days, Easter manœuvres in which it has participated. Suffice to say that on all such occasions it has earned unstinted praise from military and civilian critic alike.

In the *London Gazette*, dated Tuesday, December the 6th, 1892, we find the announcement that Her Majesty the Queen awarded the much-coveted "Volunteer Decoration" to the following officers of the London Irish, H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, Colonel Ward, C.B., Lieutenant Colonel Howland Roberts, Major and Honorary Lieutenant Colonel E. G. LLOYD, Honorary Chaplain, the Honourable and Reverend G. C. Talbot, and to several retired officers. Lieutenant Colonel LLOYD is one of the most popular and energetic officers in the corps. He has been fourteen years president and treasurer of the Shooting Committee and on the Brigade Staff, and at one time did good service for his regiment as adjutant. His son, Lieutenant N. N. LLOYD, is also in the Corps, and is at present at the Hythe School of Musketry. In the important matter of shooting, the London Irish can point to a splendid record. Thanks to their exertions, the Elcho Shield has often been sent to the Sister Isle. In 1888, when the Irish Riflemen carried off the Shield at Wimbledon, it was decided to place the trophy in the Irish Exhibition at Olympia. The splendid Shield was placed on a gun-carriage, supplied by the 2nd Middlesex Artillery, and escorted from Somerset House to Kensington by a strong detachment of the London Irish, numbering about two hundred officers and men, of whom Major LLOYD was in command. Preceded by the band of the regiment, the Shield and its escort arrived at the Hammersmith entrance to the Exhibition, where Lord Arthur Hill was in attendance to receive it. The Shield was then carried in triumphal procession round the interior of the Exhibition, preceded and followed by the London Irish escort, which included one of the Irish twenty champions, Private Smith, in full war-paint, and bearing on his arms more than a score of badges. The designated spot in the gallery having been reached, Major LLOYD ordered the

salute, the band struck up the regimental air, and then "God save the Queen," after which the men were entertained in the lower concert room to supper. During the evening, the members of the London Irish School of Arms gave an athletic performance and assault-at-arms, under the direction of Mr. Wallace, the instructor of the school, and Staff-Sergeant Braisier, the Hon. Secretary. Mr. Wallace and Corporal Brown put on the gloves and gave a capital specimen of their scientific employment; while Corporal Burbridge and Private Turner greatly amused the company with some bouts of comic boxing. The assault-at-arms was continued with sword, lance and bayonet, closing with a sham fight and fireworks. On the occasion of the funeral of Lord Tennyson in Westminster Abbey, the London Irish, together with the Queen's Westminsters and the London Scottish, furnished guards of honour. The ambulance company of the London Irish is, perhaps, the best in the volunteer service. The ambulance waggon equipment produced on parade, includes hospital tent accommodation, stores and medical transport in a condition of greater completeness than has, perhaps, yet been provided by a battalion of volunteers. The whole forms a model worthy of imitation by other battalions. The cost of the turn-out is as follows:—Waggon, £90; Harness, £20; Tent, £10; Stores, £30.

The London Irish are certainly in sad want of proper head-quarters; the small premises in King William Street, Strand, are in no way suited for the requirements of such an important regiment. It is gratifying to know, however, that there is every prospect that we shall soon find the corps domiciled in head-quarters worthy its great reputation. The strength of the corps at the present day is about one thousand, with an annually increasing percentage of efficiency. On the coming of age of the Volunteer force in 1881, an officer of the London Irish, Captain (now Colonel) Roberts, anxious to mark the truly national character of the corps, made an appeal to his compatriots in the South of Ireland for a supply of shamrocks, wherewith to decorate the headgear of the members. So splendidly was the appeal responded to, that not only was sufficient sent to supply a sprig, but every member of the ten strong companies present marched past Her Majesty with a large bunch of

the national emblem in his helmet. The members of the London Irish have always been distinguished for their hospitality. Their St. Patrick Day gatherings being something to remember. A pleasant event in connection with hospitalities dispensed, took place in 1877, when Colonel Gzowski presented to the officers of the regiment, on behalf of the Dominion of Canada, a handsome snuff box, in recognition of the friendships which had sprung up between the occupants of the camps of the former and the latter when placed side-by-side at Wimbledon. If other proof were needed of the fine social spirit which prevails throughout all ranks, and is so eminently characteristic of the nationality of its members, it may be noticed that on several festive occasions, the entire corps has been the "guest" of the popular and genial Colonel Ward.

The regiment recently suffered a severe loss in the death of its popular adjutant, Major Anton, a gentleman esteemed by all ranks.

It will thus be seen that, despite all calumny, despite the many events which have occurred during the past ten or four-

teen years, calculated to alienate the regard of England for the sister isle, that the London Irish have always remained a force upon which the Government could place the utmost confidence. Their loyalty has never been doubted, during many periods of popular excitement, calculated to promote the martial spirit of a nation which has furnished some of the best soldiers in the British army. That the Irish nation is distinctly a nation of soldiers, is a fact which can never be denied. Irishmen have but to point to Wellington, Wolseley, and last, but certainly not least, to Lord Roberts. Despite the fact that the spirit of Hibernianism is popularly opposed to everything in the shape of law and order, it remains an undeniable matter of history, that whenever real fighting has to be done, the Irish regiments have been foremost in the field. The spirit which has animated the 18th Royal Irish, the Enniskilling Dragoons, the "Death and Glory" Lancers and other deservedly famous regiments who have upheld the honour and glory of the English flag, is reflected on the whole peaceful records of the London Irish.

The Silver Christ.

By OUIDA,

*Author of "Under Two Flags," "Two Little Wooden Shoes,"
"A Dog of Flanders," "A House Party," &c.*

* ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

CHAPTER I.

GENISTRELLO is a wild place in the Pistoiese hills.

Its name is derived from the genistra, or gorse, which covers many an acre of the soil, and shares with the stone pine and the sweet chestnut the scanty earth which covers its granite and sandstone. It is beautiful exceedingly; but its beauty is only seen by those to whom it is a dead letter which they have no eyes to read. It is one of the many spurs of the Apennines, which here lie over-lapping one another in curve upon curve of wooded slopes, with the higher mountains rising behind them; palaces, which once were fortresses, hidden in their valleys, and ruined castles or deserted monasteries crowning their crests.

From some of these green hills the sea is visible, and when the sun sets where the sea is and the red evening glows behind the distant peaks, it is exceedingly beautiful.

On the side of this lonely hill, known as Genistrello, there dwelt a man of the name of Castruccio Lascarisi. He was called "Caris" by the whole countryside; indeed, scarcely any knew that he had another patronymic, so entirely amongst these people does the nickname extinguish, by its perpetual use, the longer appellation.

His family name was of Greek extraction undoubtedly; learned Greeks made it familiar in the Italian Renaissance at the courts of Lorenzo and of Ludivico; but how it had travelled to the Pistoiese hills to be borne by unlearned hinds none knew, any more than any know who first made the red tulip blossom as a wild flower amidst the wheat, or who first sowed the bulb of the narcissus amongst the wayside grass.

He lived miles away from the chapel and the hamlet. He had a little cabin in

the heart of the chestnut woods, which his forefathers had lived in before him; they had no title which they could have shown for it except usage, but that had been title enough for them and was enough for Caris.

It had been always so. It would be always so. His ideas went no further. The autumnal migration was as natural and inevitable to him as to the storks and herons and wild duck which used to sail over his head, going southward like himself as he walked through the Tuscan to the Roman Maremma. But his dislike to the Maremma winters was great, and had never changed in him since he had trotted by his father's side, a curly-pated baby in a little goatskin shirt like a Correggio St. John.

What he longed for—what he loved were the cool heights of Genistrello and the stone hut with the little rivulet of water gushing at its threshold. No one had ever disturbed them. It was a square little place built of big unmortared stones in old Etruscan fashion; the smoke from the hearth went out by a hole in the roof, and a shutter and door of unplanned wood closed its only apertures.

The lichen and weeds and mosses had welded the stones together, and climbed up over its conical rush roof. No better home could be needed in summer-time; and when the cold weather came, he locked the door and went down, with his pack on his back and a goat's-hair belt round his loins, to take the familiar way to the Roman Maremma.

Caris was six-and-twenty years old; he worked amongst the chestnut woods in summer and went to the Maremma for field labour in the winter, as so many of these husbandmen do; walking the many leagues which separate the provinces, and living hardly in both seasons. The songs they sing are full of allusions to this semi-

nomadic life, and the annual migration has been a custom ever since the world was young; when the great Roman fleets anchored where now are sand and marsh, and stately classic villas lifted their marbles to the sun where now the only habitation seen is the charcoal-burner's rush-roofed, moss-lined hut.

Caris was a well-built, lithe, slender son of the soil, brown from sun and wind, with the straight features and the broad low brows of the classic type, and great brown eyes like those of the oxen which he drove over the vast plains down in the Maremma solitudes. He knew nothing except his work.

He was not very wise, and he was wholly unlearned, but he had a love of nature in his breast and he would sit at the door of his hut at evening time, with his bowl of bean soup between his knees, and often forget to eat in his absorbed delight as the roseate glow from the vanished sun-rays overspread all the slopes of the Pistoiese Apennines and the snow-crowned crests of the Carrara mountains.

"What do you see there, goose?" said a charcoal burner once, passing him as he sat thus upon his threshold with the dog at his feet.

Caris shrugged his shoulders stupidly and half-ashamed. He could not read the great book out-spread upon the knees of the mountains, yet he imperfectly felt the beauty of its emblazoned pages.

The only furniture in the cabin was a table made of a plank, two rude benches, and one small cupboard; the bed was only dried leaves and moss. There were a pipkin, two platters, and a big iron pot which swung by a cord and a hook over the stones where the fire, when lighted, burned. They were enough; he would not have known what to do with more, if he had had more. He was only there from May to October; and in the fragrant summers of Italian chestnut woods, privation is easily borne. The winter life was harder and more hateful; yet it never occurred to him to do else than to go to Maremma; his father and grandfather had always gone thither and as natural as the chestnuts ripen and fall, so do the men of the hills in autumn join the long lines of shepherds and drovers and women and children and flocks and herds which wind their way down the mountain slopes and across the level wastes of plain and marsh

to seek herbage and work for the winter-time.

It never entered the head of Caris, or of the few who knew him or worked with him, to wonder how he and his had come thither. They were there as the chestnut-trees were, as the gorse was, as the goats and squirrels and wood birds were there. The peasant no more wonders about his own existence than a stone does. For generations a Lascarisi had lived in that old stone hut which might itself be a relic of an Etruscan tomb or temple. No one was concerned to know further.

The peasant does not look back; he only sees the road to gain his daily meal of bread or chestnuts. The past has no meaning to him, and to the future he never looks. That is the reason why those who want to cultivate or convince him fail utterly. If a man cannot see the horizon itself, it is of no use to point out to him spires or trees or towers which stand out against it.

The world has never understood that the moment he is made to see, he is unhappy, being ill at ease and morbidly envious and ashamed, and wholly useless. Left alone, he is content in his own ruminant manner; as the buffalo is when left untortured amidst the marshes, grazing at peace and slumbering amidst the rushes and the canes.

Caris was thus content. He had health and strength, though sometimes he had a fever-chill from new turned soil and sometimes a frost-chill from going out on an empty stomach before the sun had broken the deep shadows of the night. But from these maladies all out-door labourers suffer, and he was young and they soon passed. He had been the only son of his mother; and this fact had saved him from conscription. As if she had lived long enough when she had rendered him this service, she died just as he had fulfilled his twenty-third year; and without her the stone-hut seemed for a while lonely; he had to make his fire, and boil or roast his chestnuts, and mend holes in his shirts and make his own rye loaves, but he soon got used to this, and when in Maremma he always worked with a gang and was fed and lodged, badly, indeed, but regularly, at the huge stone barn which served such purposes on the vast tenuta where the long lines of husbandmen toiled from dusk of dawn to dusk of eve under the eye and the lash of their overseer: and when on his native slopes of Genistrello he was always welcome to join the

charcoal burners' rough company or the woodmen's scanty supper, and seldom passed, or had need to pass, his leisure hours alone. And these were very few.

His mother had been a violent-tempered woman, ruling him with a rod of iron, as she had ruled her husband before him; a woman loud of tongue, stern of temper, dreaded for miles around as a witch and an evil eye; and although the silence and solitude which reigned in the cabin after her death oppressed him painfully at first, he soon grew used to these and found the comfort of them. He brought a dog to keep him company in his lonely hut after his mother's death; a white dog of the Maremma breed, and he and the dog kept house together in the lonely woods in fellowship and peace. Caris was gentle and could never beat or kick a beast as others of his kind do; and the oxen he drove knew this. He felt more akin to them and to the dogs than he did to the men with whom he worked. He could not have expressed or explained this, but he felt it.

He had little mind, and what he had, moved slowly when it moved at all; but he had a generous nature, a loyal soul, and a simple and manly enjoyment of his hard life. It did not seem hard to him. He had run about on his bare feet all his childhood until their soles were as hard as leather, and he was so used to his daily meal of chestnuts in cold weather, and of maize or rye bread, with cabbage or bean soup, in the hot season, that he never thought of either as meagre fare. In summer he wore a rough hempen shirt and trousers; in winter, goatskin and rough homespun wool. In appearance, in habits, in clothing, in occupation, he differed little from the peasant who was on that hillside in the times of Pliny and of Propertius. Only the gods were changed; Pan piped no more in the thicket, the Naiad laughed no longer in the brook, the Nymph and Satyr frolicked never beneath the fronds of the ferns.

In their stead there was only a little gaudy chapel on a stony slope, and a greasy, double-chinned, yellow-cheeked man in black, who frowned if you did not give him your hardly-earned pence, and lick the uneven bricks of the chapel floor when he ordered you a penance.

Caris cared little for that man's frown.

He sat thus at his door one evening when the sun was setting behind the many

peaks and domes of the Apennine spurs which fronted him. The sun itself had sunk beyond them half an hour before, but the red glow which comes and stays long after it was in the heavens and on the hills.

Genistrello was a solitary place, and only here and there a hut or cot like his own was hidden away under the saplings and undergrowth. Far away, down in the valley, were the belfries and towers of the little, strong-walled city which had been so often as a lion in the path to the invading hosts of Germany; and like a narrow white cord the post-road, now so rarely used, wound in and out until its slender thread was lost in the blue vapours of the distance and the shadows from the clouds.

Bells were tolling from all the little spires and towers on the hills and in the valleys, for it was a vigil, and there was the nearer tinkle of the goats' bells under the heather and broom as those innocent marauders cropped their supper off the tender chestnut shoots, the trails of ground ivy and the curling woodbine. Caris, with his bowl of bean soup between his knees, and his hunch of rye bread in his hand, ate hungrily, whilst his eyes filled themselves with the beauty of the landscape. His stomach was empty—which he knew, and his soul was empty—which he did not know.

He looked up and saw a young woman standing in front of him. She was handsome, with big, bright eyes and a rosy mouth, and dusky, glossy hair coiled up on her head like a Greek Venus.

He had never seen her before, and her sudden apparition there startled him.

"Good even, Caris," she said familiarly, with a smile like a burst of sunlight. "Is the mother indoors, eh?"

Caris continued to stare at her. "Eh, are you deaf?" she asked impatiently. "Is the mother in? I want to know?"

"My mother is dead," said Caris, without preamble.

"Dead! When did she die?"

"Half a year ago," said Caris, with the peasant's confusion of dates and elongation of time.

"That is impossible," said the young woman quickly. "I saw her myself and spoke with her here on this very spot in Easter week. What makes you say she is dead?"

"Because she is dead!" said Caris, doggedly. "If you do not believe it, go

and ask the sacristan and sexton over there."

He made a gesture of his head towards the belfry of the old hoary church, which was seven miles away, amongst the chestnut woods of an opposite hill-side, and here his mother had been buried, by her wish, because it was her birth-place.

The girl this time believed him. She was dumb for a little while with astonishment and regret. Then she said, in a tone of awe and expectation, "She left her learning and power with you, eh?—and the books?"

"No," said Caris rudely. "I had all the uncanny things buried with her. What use were they? She lived and died with scarce a shift to her back."

"Oh!" said the girl, in a shocked tone, as though she reproved a blasphemy. "She was a wonderful woman, Caris."

Caris laughed a little.

"Eh, you say so. Well, all her wisdom never put bit nor drop in her mouth nor a copper piece in her hand that I did not work for; what use was it, pray?"

"Hush! Don't speak so!" said the maiden, looking timidly over her shoulder to the undergrowth and coppice growing dim in the shadows of the evening.

"'Tis the truth!" said Caris, stubbornly. "I did my duty by her, poor soul; and yet I fear me the Evil One waited for her all the while, for as soon as the rattle came in her throat, a white owl flapped and screeched on the thatch and a black cat had sat on the stones yonder ever since the sun had set."

"The saints preserve us!" murmured the girl, her rich brown and red skin growing pale.

There was silence; Caris finished munching his bread; he looked now and then at his visitor with open-eyed surprise and mute expectation.

"You have buried the things with her?" she asked him, in a low tone at length.

He nodded in assent.

"What a pity! What a pity!"

"Why that?"

"Because if they are underground with her, nobody can use them."

Caris stared with his eyes wider opened still. "What do you want with the devil's tools—a fresh, fair young thing like you?"

"Your mother used them for me," she answered crossly. "And she had told me a number of things—aye, a vast number! And just in the middle father spied us out,

and he swore at her and dragged me away, and I had never a chance to get back here till to-night, and now—now you say she is dead, and she will never tell me aught any more."

"What can you want so sore to know?" said Caris, with wonder, as he rose to his feet.

"That is my business," said the girl.

"True, so it is," said Caris.

But he looked at her with wonder in his dark brown ox-like eyes.

"Where do you live?" he asked; "and how knew you my name?"

"Everybody knows your name," she answered. "You are Caris, the son of Lisabetta, and when you sit on your doorstep it would be a fool indeed would not see who you are."

"So it would," said Caris. "But you," he added after a pause, "who are you? and what did you want with Black Magic?"

"I am Santina, the daughter of Neri, the smith, by the west gate in Pistoia," she said, in reply to the first question, and making none to the second.

"But what wanted you of my mother?" he persisted.

"They said she knew strange things," said the girl evasively.

"If she did, she had little profit of them," said Caris sadly.

The girl looked at him with great persuasiveness in her face and leaned a little nearer to him.

"You did not really bury the charms with her? You have got them inside? You will let me see them, eh?"

"As the saints live, I buried them," said Caris, truthfully; "they were rubbish, or worse; accursed maybe. They are safe down in the ground till the Last Day. What can such a bright wench as yourself want with such queer, unhallowed notions?"

The girl Santina glanced over her shoulder to make sure that no one was listening; then she said in a whisper:

"There is the Gobbo's treasure in these woods somewhere—and Lisabetta had the wand that finds gold and silver."

Caris burst into a loud laugh.

"Ah, truly! That is a good jest. If she could find gold and silver, why did we always have iron spoons for our soup, and a gnawing imp in our stomachs? Go to, my maiden. Do not tell such tales. Lisabetta was a poor and hungry woman

all her days, and scarce left enough linen to lay her out in decently, so help me Heaven!"

The girl shook her head.

"You know there is the treasure in the woods."

"Nay, I never heard of it. Oh, the Gobbo's! Che-che! For hundreds of years they have grubbed for it all over the woods, and who ever found anything, eh?"

"Your mother was very nigh it often and often. She told me."

"In her dreams, poor soul!"

"But dreams mean a great deal."

"Sometimes," said Caris seriously.

"But what is it to you?" he added, the suspicion, always inherent to the peasant struggling with his admiration of the girl, who, unbidden, had seated herself upon the stone before the door. With feminine instinct, she felt that to make him do what she wished, she must confide in him, or appear to confide.

And thereon she told him that unless she could save herself, her family would wed her to a wealthy old curmudgeon who was a cart-maker in the town; and to escape this fate, she had interrogated the stars by means of the dead Lisabetta and of the astrologer Faraone, who dwelt also in the hills, but this latter reader of destiny would tell her nothing, because he was a friend of her father's, and now the witch of Genistrello was dead and had left her fate but half told!

"What did she tell you?" said Caris, wincing at the word witch.

"Only that I should go over the mountains to some city and grow rich. But it was all dark—obscure—uncertain; she said she would know more next time; and how could I tell that before I came again she would have died?"

"You could not tell that, no," said Caris absently.

He was thinking of the elderly, well-to-do wheelwright in the town, and he felt that he would have liked to brain him with one of his own wooden spokes or iron linch pins. For the girl Santina was very beautiful, as she sat there with her large eyes shining in the shadows and the tears of chagrin and disappointment stealing down her cheeks. For her faith in her charms and cards had been great, and in her bosom there smouldered desires and ideas of which she did not speak.

She saw the effect that her beauty produced, and said to herself: "He shall

dig up the things before he is a week older."

She got up with apparent haste and alarm; seeing how dark it had grown around her, only a faint red light lingering far away above the lines of the mountains.

"I am staying at the four roads with my aunt, who married Masso," she said, as she looked over her shoulder and walked away between the chestnut saplings and the furze.

Caris did not offer to accompany or try to follow her. He stood like one bewitched, watching her lithe, erect figure run down the hill and vanish as the path wound out of sight amongst the pines. No woman had ever moved him thus. He felt as if she had poured into him at once scalded wine and snow water.

She was so handsome and bold and lissom, and yet she made his flesh creep talking of his mother's incantations and bidding him knock at the door of the grave.

"What an awful creature for tempting a man is a woman," he thought; "and they will scream at their own shadows one minute and dare the devil himself the next!"

That night Caris sat long smoking his black pipe on the stone before the door where she had sat, and the scalded wine and the snow water coursed by turns feverishly through his veins, as once through Cymon's.

CHAPTER II.

"WHERE hast been, hussy?" said Masso crossly yet jokingly to his niece when she went home that night.

The four-roads was a place where the four cart tracks at the foot of that group of hills met and parted; a seller of wood had his cottage there, and his wood yards and sheds thatched with furze. He was the man Masso, whom the aunt of Santina had married many years before.

They were people well-off, who ate meat, drank wine, and had a house full of hardware, pottery and old oak—people as far removed from Caris and his like as if they had been lords or princes. He knew them by sight, and doffed his hat to them when he met them in the woods.

The thought that she was the niece of Masso, the man who paid for his wood and charcoal with rolls of bank-notes and lent his own mules to bring the loads down

from the hills, placed Santina leagues away from and above him.

The only women with whom he had ever had any intercourse had been the rude wenches who tramped with the herds and dug and hoed and cut grass and grain on the wastes of the Maremma—creatures burnt black with the sun, and wrinkled by the winds, and with skin hard and hairy, and feet whose soles were like wood; "*la femelle de l'homme*," but not so clean of hide or sweet of breath as the heifers they drove down along the sea-ways in autumn weather.

This girl who called herself Santina was wholesome as lavender, fresh as field thyme, richly and fairly odoured as the flower of the wild pomegranate.

When supper was over and the house was on the point of being bolted and barred, Santina threw her brown soft round arm round his neck.

"I went down to see Don Fabio, and he was out, and I sat talking with his woman, and forgot the time," she said, penitently.

Don Fabio was the priest of the little gaudy church low down in the valley where the post-road ran.

Masso patted the cheek, which was like an apricot, and believed her.

Her aunt did not.

"There is still snow where the man of God lives up yonder, and there is no water, only dust, on her shoes," thought the shrewd observer.

But she did not say so: for she had no wish to put her husband out of humour with her kinsfolk.

But to Santina, when with her alone, she said testily—

"I fear you are going again to the black arts of that woman Lisabetta; no good ever is got of them; it is playing with fire, and the devil breathes the fire out of his mouth!"

"I cannot play with it if I wished," answered Santina innocently; "Lisabetta is dead months ago."

"That is no loss to anybody if it be true," said Eufemia Masso angrily.

Lisabetta had been such an obscure and lonely creature that her death had been taken little note of anywhere, and the busy, bustling housewife of Masso had had no heed of such an event. She had not even known the woman by sight; had only been cognizant of her evil repute for powers of sorcery.

Santina herself knew that; she was well

aware that decent maidens do not do such things when the dower clothing and linen are all stitched, and the marriage-bed bought by the bridegroom. She knew, but she did not care. She was headstrong, changeable, vain and full of thirst for pleasure and for triumph and for wealth. She would not pass her life in her little native town in the wheelwright's old house with a jealous, rheumatic curmudgeon for all the saints in heaven and all the friends on earth.

"Not I! Not I! Oh, why did Lisabetta go underground for ever with half the cards unread?" she thought, as she sat up on her couch of sacking and dry maize leaves, and she shook her clenched hands at the moon with anger at its smiling indifference. The moon could sail where it chose and see what it liked; and she was chained down here by her youth, and her sex, and her ignorance, and her poverty; and her only one faint hope of escape and aid lay in the closed grave of a dead old woman.

Santina went up to her room, which she shared with three of the Masso children. Long after they were sleeping in a tangle of rough hair and brown limbs and healthy, rosy nudity, the girl, their elder, sat up on the rude couch staring at the moon through the little square window.

She was thinking of words that Lisabetta had said as she had dealt the cards, and gazed in a bowl of spring water: "Over the hills and far away; wealth and pleasure and love galore—where? how? when?—aye, that is hid; but we shall see, we shall see; only over the hills you go, and all the men are your slaves."

How? when? where? That was hidden with the dead fortune-teller under the earth.

Santina did not for a moment doubt the truth of the prophecy, but she was impatient for its fulfilment to begin. She knew she was of unusual beauty, and the organist at the duomo had told her that her voice was of rare compass, and only wanted tuition to be such a voice as fetches gold in the big world which lay beyond these hills. But that was all.

She could sing well and loudly, and she knew all the "*cangene*" and "*stornelli*" of the district by heart; but there her knowledge stopped; and no one had cared to instruct or enlighten her more. Her own family thought the words of the organist rubbish.

There are so many of these clear-voiced, flute-throated girls and boys singing in their adolescence in the fields and woods and highways; but no one thinks anything of their carols, and life and its travail tells on them and makes them mute, and their once liquid tones grow harsh and rough from exposure to the weather, and from calling so loudly from hill to hill to summon their children, or their cattle, or their comrades, home.

The human voice is a pipe soon broken. The nightingale sings on and on and on, from youth to age, and neither rain nor wind hurts his throat; but men and women, in rough rustic lives, soon lose their gift of song. They sing at all ages, indeed, over their furrows, their washing tank, their yoked oxen, their plait of straw or hank of flax; but the voice loses its beauty early as the skin its bloom.

Santina had no notion in what way she could make hers a means to reach those distant parts in which her fate was to await her, if the cards spake truly. Only to get away somewhere, somehow, was her fixed idea; and she would no more have married the sober, well-to-do wheelwright her people picked out for her than she would have thrown her vigorous and virgin body down the well.

"He shall get me the cards and the treasure-wand out of her grave before this moon is out," she said, between her white teeth, with which she could crack nuts and bite through string and grind the black bread into powder.

Caris took no definite shape in her eyes except as an instrument to get her will and ways. She was but a country girl, just knowing her letters, and no more; but the yeast of restless ambition was fermenting in her.

She sat staring at the moon, while the tired children slept as motionless as plucked poppies. The moon was near its full. Before it waned, she swore to herself that she would have Lisabetta's magic tools in her hands. Could she only know more, or else get money! She was ignorant, but she knew that money was power. With money she could get away over those hills which seemed drawn like a screen between her fate and her.

Marry Matteo! She laughed aloud, and thought the face in the moon laughed too.

The outfit was made, the pearls were bought; the "stimatore," who is called in

to appraise every article of a marriage corredo, had fingered and weighed and adjudged the cost of every single thing, and the wheelwright had bought the bed and the furniture, and many other matters not usual or incumbent on a bridegroom, and her parents had said that such a warm man and so liberal a one was never seen in their day, and very little time was there now left wherein she could escape her fate.

All unwillingness on her part would have been regarded by her parents as insanity, and would have only seemed to her bridegroom as the spice which is added to the stewed hare. There was no chance for her but to use this single fortnight which she had been allowed to spend in farewell at Massa.

Her uncle and aunt had helped generously in the getting together of the corredo; and their wish to have her with them had been at once conceded. Her parents were poor, and the woodsman was rich as rubies are esteemed amongst the oak scrub and chestnut saplings of the Pistoiese Apennines.

The Masso people liked her and indulged her; but had they dreamed that she meant to elude her marriage, they would have dragged her by the hair of her head, or kicked her with the soles of their hob-nailed boots down the hillside into her father's house, and given her up to punishment without pity, as they would have given a runaway horse or dog.

The day for the ceremony had not been fixed, for in this country, where love intrigues speed as swift by as lightning, matrimonial contracts move slowly and cautiously; but the word was passed, the goods were purchased, the house was ready; and to break a betrothal at such a point would have been held a crime and a disgrace.

Though she was voluble and garrulous, and imprudent and passionate, she could keep her own counsel.

Under her Tuscan volubility there was also the Tuscan secretiveness. Nobody saw inside her true thoughts. Her mind was like a little locked iron box into which no one could peep.

The Tuscan laughs quickly, weeps quickly, rages, fumes, smiles, jumps with joy; seems a merely emotional creature, with his whole heart turned inside out; but in his inmost nature there is always an ego wholly different to that which is shown to others, always a deep reserve

of unspoken intents and calculations and desires.

It resembles a rosebush, all bloom and dew and leaf and sunshine, inside which is made the nest of a little snake, never seen, but always there; sometimes instead of the snake, there is only a flat stone; but something alien there always is under the carelessly blowing roses.

The Tuscan never completely trusts his nearest or dearest, his oldest friend, his truest companion, his fondest familiar; be he gentle or simple, he never gives himself away.

The homeliest son and daughter of the soil will always act as though he or she were cognizant of the axiom of the fine philosopher of courts: "Deal with your friend at all times as though he would some day become your enemy."

Santina therefore had told her secret intent to no living soul and only Caris's old weird mother had been shrewd enough to guess it in the girl's flashing eyes and in her eager questioning of fate.

The house of Masso was a very busy house, especially so at this season of the year, when the purchasing and fetching and stacking of wood for the coming winter was in full vigour, and all the boys and girls were up in the woods all day long, seeking out and bringing down brushwood and pines and cut heather.

Santina with wonderful alacrity, entered into the work, although usually she was averse to rough labour, fearing that it would spoil her hands and her skin before she could get to that unknown life of delight which she coveted.

But going with the heedless and unobservant children up on the hill-side where the heather and chestnut scrub grew, and farther up still where the tall stone pines grew, she had chances of meeting Caris, or of again getting away to his hut unnoticed. He was usually at this season occupied in carrying wood or helping the charcoal-burners, and was now in one place, now in another, as men who have no fixed labour must be.

Moreover, her just estimate of her own attraction for him made her guess that this year he would choose to labour nearer to Masso than usual, if he could get employment, and she was in no manner surprised when she saw him amongst a group of men who were pulling at the ropes of one of her uncle's wood-carts to prevent the cart and the mules harnessed to it from

running amuck down the steep incline which led to that green nook at the foot of Genistrello where the woodman's buildings and sheds were situated.

She gave him a sidelong glance and a shy smile as she passed them, and Caris, colouring to the roots of his hair, let his rope slacken and fall, and was sworn at fiercely by his fellow-labourers, for the cart lurched and one of the wheels sank up to its hub in the soft wet sand.

"Get away, lass," shouted the carter roughly; "where women are men's work is always fouled."

"You unmannerly churl;" shouted Caris, as he struck the carter sharply across the shoulders with his end of the rope.

The man flung himself round and tried to strike his assailant in return with the thong of his long mule-whip, but Caris caught it in his grip and closed with him.

They wrestled savagely for a moment, then the carter, freeing his right arm, snatched out of his breeches-belt the knife which every man carries, however severely the law may denounce and forbid it. It would have buried its sharp, narrow blade in the ribs or the breast of Caris had not the other men, at a shout from Masso, who came hurrying up, thrown themselves on the two combatants and pulled them apart.

"To — with you both!" cried Masso, furious to see his cart stuck in the sand, its load of wood oscillating, and the time wasted of the men whom he paid by the day.

Santina had stood quietly on the bank above the mules and the men, watching with keen interest and pleasure.

"Why did you stop them, uncle?" she cried to Masso pettishly. "I do love to see two good lads fight. 'Tis a sight that warms one's blood like 'vin santo.'"

But no one heeded what she said.

On these hills women are used, but never listened to.

"The cows give milk, not opinions," the men said to their womenkind.

Only Caris had seen in the sunlight that lithe, erect figure amongst the gorse, and those two burning, melting, shining eyes, which had incited him to combat.

He was deeply angered with Masso for stopping the duello.

A knife? What mattered a knife? He had one, too, in his breeches-band; in another second, he too, would have had

his out, and then Santina would have seen work fit for a brave, bold woman to watch, with the red blood running merrily through the thirsty sand and the tufted heather.

He was not quarrelsome or bloodthirsty; but any man who goes down into Maremma through the "Macchia," where the "mal Vivonti" hide, learns to know very well how to sell his own life dearly, and hold the lives of others cheaply; and these contraband knives, which the law forbids so uselessly, cost very little to buy, and yet do their work surely, quickly and well.

He cast one longing look up at Santina, standing above amongst the gorse, and moved on sullenly with the other men and the mule, when the cart, with rare effort, had been pulled erect and dragged out of the sand. It was then only an hour or two after daybreak.

The day came and ended without Caris seeing his goddess again.

During the repose at noontide, when he with others broke bread and ate soup at the big table in Masso's kitchen, she was not there. They were served by her aunt, Eufemia. He had only accepted this work of fetching and stacking for sake of the vicinity to her which it offered; and his heart was heavy and his blood was turned, as he would himself have expressed it.

Chagrin and irritation in the Italian's opinion, turns the blood as tempest changes milk. He was too shy and tongue-tied to venture to inquire for her; and the instinct of secrecy which characterises all passion was joined to his natural hesitation in speech.

Masso's people seemed, too, to him to be very grand folks, with their byres and stalls filled with beasts, and their casks of wine and great earthen jars of oil standing there for anybody to read in mute declaration of their prosperity.

A barrel of wine had never entered the hut of the Lascarisi within the memory of man. No one took any notice of him. He was a "bracciante," paid by the day, nothing more. Had Eufemia known that he was the old witch's son he would have attracted her attention; but she did not know it. When there is rough work to be done, nobody notices who does it.

When the last wood of the day was brought in, Caris went home by himself, by ways he knew. He was downcast and dull. He had been hauled of his knife-

play with the carter, and he had not seen Santina.

At a bend in the hill-path, where the chestnut saplings grew taller than usual, and aged pines with scaly, scarred trunks were left standing, he heard a laugh amongst the leafy scrub, and in the dusk of the moonless evening a slender, straight figure shot up from its screen of heather.

"Eh, Caris!" cried the girl to him. "What a poor day's work! Have you left black Simon without an inch of steel in him? Fie for shame! A man should always write his name large when he has a stiletto for his pen."

Caris gazed at her dumb and agitated, the veins in his throat and temples throbbing.

"It was your uncle stopped the play," he muttered; "and I could not begin to brawl in his house."

Santina shrugged her shoulders. "Brave men don't want excuses," she said unkindly.

"Ask of me in Maremma," said Caris sullenly; "they will tell you whether men taste my blade."

"Maremma is far," said Santina, sarcastic and jeering; "and the men there are weak!"

"You shall see what you shall see," muttered Caris, growing purple, red, and then pale. "Tell me a man you have a quarrel with—nay, one who stands well with you—that will be better."

"Those are words," she said with curt contempt.

"You shall see deeds. Who is it that stands well with you?"

"No one. Many wish it."

"Your promised man should; but he is old, and a poor creature. 'Twould be no credit to do away with him."

"He is a poor creature," said Santina, her lips curling. "So are you, when to do a woman a pleasure you will not open a grave."

"Open a grave! Nay, nay, the saints forbid."

"The saints! That is how all weaklings and cowards talk. What harm could it do any saint in heaven for you to get those magic things? If they be the devil's toys and tools, as you say, more reason to pluck them out of holy ground."

"How you go on!" muttered Caris, whose slower brain was scared and terrified by his companion's rapid and fearless strides of thought. "Heaven have mercy

on us! You would have me commit sacrilege! Rifle a tomb! Holy Christ! and that tomb my mother's!"

The sweat stood on his brow, and made the chestnut curls of his hair wet as with dew or rain.

Santina poured into his all the magnetic force and fire of her own eyes, shining in the dusk like some wild cat of the woods.

"Sacrilege! whew! Where got you that big word? You put the things in; you can take the things out. Your mother will sleep sounder without them. I want them, my lad, do you understand? I want them. And what I want I get from those who love me; and those who deny me, hate me, and I hate them."

Caris shuddered as he heard.

"I love you," he stammered. "Do not hate me, for pity's sake, do not hate me."

"Open the grave for me, then," she said, with her dark level brows contracting over her luminous eyes.

"Ah, anything else!"

"Oh, aye! It is always anything else, except the one thing which is wanted!"

"But what is it you want?"

"I want the charms and the wand and the book out of your mother's grave."

"What could you do with them? Without the knowledge, they are no more than a dry twig and a few dirty play-cards."

"How know you what knowledge I have? I want the things; that is all, I tell you."

"They were accursed if they had any use in them. And what use had they? She who understood them lived and died all but a beggar. If they had any power in them, they cheated and starved her."

The speech was a long one for Caris, whose thoughts were so little used to fit themselves to utterance.

Santina heard him with the passionate impatience and intolerance of a swift mind with a dull one, of a bold will with a timid nature.

She had set her soul on possessing these magic things; she was convinced that she should find the way to make them work; superstition was intense and overwhelming in her, and allied to a furious ambition, all the more powerful because given loose rein through her complete ignorance.

"Oh, you white-livered ninny!" she cried to him, with boundless scorn. "Would to Heaven black Simon had buried his blade in you. It would have rid the earth of a dolt and a dastard!"

"Then let me be, if I be worth so little," said Caris, sullenly, whilst his eyes devoured her beauty half seen in the darkness which preceded the late rising of the moon. Then she saw that she had mistaken her path, and she changed it. She let great tears come into her eyes, and her mouth trembled, and her bosom heaved.

"This was the lad I could have loved!" she murmured. "This was the strong, bold youth whom I thought would be my brave and bonny damo before all the country side. Oh, what fools are women—what fools!—taken by the eye with a falcon glance and a sheaf of nut-brown curls and a broad breast that looks as if the heart of a true man beat in it. Oh, woe is me! Oh, woe is me! I dreamed a dream, and it had no more truth in it than the slate shingle here has of silver."

She kicked downward scornfully as she spoke the crumbling slate and mia, which showed here and there betwixt the heather plants, in the tremulous shadow relics of a quarry worked long centuries before and forsaken when the fires of the camp of Hun and Goth had blazed upon those hillsides.

Caris stared at her as she spoke, his whole frame thrilling and all his senses alive as they had never been before under a woman's glamour. He heeded not the derision, he thought not of the strangeness of the avowal; delicacy is not often a plant which grows in uncultivated soil, and he had none of the intuition and suspicion which an educated man would have been moved by before such an avowal and such an upbraiding. He only knew, or thought he was bidden to know, that he had the power in him to please her fancy and awaken her desire.

"You love me! You can love me!" he shouted in a loud, vibrating, exultant voice, which awakened all the echoes of the hills around him, and he sprang forward to seize her in his arms. But Santina, agile and strong, pushed him back, and stood aloof.

"Nay, nay, stand off!" she cried to him. "Ne'er a coward shall touch me. All I said was, you might have won me."

"I am no coward," said Caris hotly. "And why do you fool and tempt one so? 'Tis unfair. 'Tis unfair. You may rue it."

His face was convulsed, his eyes were aflame, he breathed like a bull in a hard combat.

Santina smiled ; that was how she liked to see a man look.

She had all the delight in watching and weighing the effects of the passion which she excited that had moved the great queens of Asia and the empresses of Rome. She was only a poor girl, but the love of dominance and the violence of the senses were in her, strong and hot and reckless.

In her was all that ferment of ambition and vanity and discontent which drives out from their hamlets those who feel there is something in them different to their lot and foreign to their fellows. She had never been anywhere farther afield than the hills and woods about Pistanse, but she knew that there were big cities somewhere, where men were made of money, and women wore satin all day long, and everybody ate and drank out of gold plates and silver vessels. She knew that ; and to get to these kingdoms of delight was the one longing which possessed her day and night.

She wanted to get one thing out of this man—the means of liberty—and she cared nothing how she won it. Besides, he was so simple, so malleable, so credulous, it diverted her to play on him as one could play on a chitarra, making the strings leap and sigh and thrill and groan. And he was good to look at, too ; with his tanned fresh face, and his clustering curls, and his strong, straight, cleanly limbs.

"I only said you might have won me," she repeated. "Nay, you may still, if you have the heart of a man, and not of a mouse. Hearken !"

"Do not fool me," said Caris sternly, "or as the Lord lives above us——"

She laughed airily.

"Oh, big oaths cannot frighten me. It shall lie with you. I want those things of your mother's. When you bring them I will thank you—as you choose."

He grew grey under his brown, bright skin.

"Always that !" he muttered. "Always that !"

"Naturally, it is what I want."

"Go, get them, since you think it holy work."

"I will," said Santina, "and then good-night to you, my good Caris ; you will never see me more."

She turned on her heel and began to run down the slope in the moonlight.

Santina would not have ventured inside the graveyard at night to get mountains of

gold. She would not have passed after nightfall within a mile of its gate without crossing herself and murmuring aves all the way ; superstition was born and bred in every inch of her bone, and every drop of her blood ; and she would no more have carried out her threat than she would have carried the mountain upon her shoulders.

But he did not know that : she was so bold, so careless, so self-confident, if she had told him she would split open the earth to its centre he would have believed her.

He overtook her as she fled down the slope, and seized her in his arms.

"No, no !" he cried, close in her ear. "It is not work for you. If it must be done, I will do it. Will you swear that you will give yourself to me if I bring you the unholy things ?"

"I love you !" she said breathlessly, while her lips brushed his throat. "Yes, I do love you ! Go, get the things, and bring them hither at dawn. I will meet you. Oh, I will find the way to use them, never fear. That is my business. Get you gone. They are calling below. They shut the house at the twenty-four."

No one was calling, but she wished him away. He was strong, and he was on fire with her touch and her glance ; he strained her in his arms until her face was bruised against the hairy sinews and bones of his chest.

She thrust him away with a supreme effort, and ran down the stony side of the hill, and was swallowed up in the duski-ness of the tangled scrub.

A little scops owl flitted past, uttering its soft, low note, which echoes so far and long in the silence of evening in the hills.

Caris shook himself like a man who has been half-stunned by a heavy fall. He was on fire with the alcohol of passion and chilled to the marrow by the promise he had made.

Open a tomb ! Rifle a grave ! See his mother again in her cere clothes—see all the untold and untellable horrors of which the dead and the earth make their secrets !

Oh, why had he ever admitted that he had sealed up the uncanny things in the coffin ! He could have bitten his tongue out for its tell-tale folly.

He had thrust them in almost without consciousness of his act as he had hammered the lid down on the deal shell all alone with it in his cabin.

The things had been always under his

mother's pillow at night ; it had seemed to him that they ought to go with her down to the grave. He had had a secret fear of them, and he had thought that their occult powers would be nullified once thrust in sacred soil. He had been afraid to burn them.

The churchyard in which his mother lay was on the topmost slope of Genistrello, where the brown brick tower of the bare little mediæval church rose amongst the highest pines, upon a wind-swept and storm-scarred scarp.

Few were the dead who were taken there ; meagre and miserable were the lot and the pittance of its poor vicar, and weatherbeaten and worn by toil were the score of peasants who made up its congregation, coming thence from the scattered huts and farmhouses of the hill-side.

It was five miles off from the chestnut wood above Massa ; a lonely, and not over safe tramp across the hills and the water-courses and the brushwood.

But it was not the distance which troubled him, nor any possible danger. He knew his way through all that country, and the full, round moon was by now showing her broad disc over the edge of the farther mountains. But the thought of what he would have to do at the end of his pilgrimage made him sick with a fear not altogether unmanly.

He knew that what he would do would be sacrilege and punishable by law, but it was not of that he thought : his mind was filled with those terrors of the nether world, of the unknown, of the unseen, which a lonely life and a latent imagination made at once so indistinct and so powerful to him.

"Had she but asked me anything else !" he thought piteously. "Anything !—to cut off my right hand or to take the life of any man !"

But she had set him this task ; inexorable as women of old set their lovers to search for the Grail or beard the Saracen in his mosque, and he knew that he must do what she willed or never again feel those warm red lips breathe on his own.

He tightened the canvas belt round his loins and went home to his cabin to fetch a pick-axe and a spade, and bidding his dog stay to guard the empty hut, he set out to walk across the vast steep breadth

of woodland darkness which separated him from the church and churchyard which were his goal.

A labourer on those hills all his life, and accustomed also to the more perilous and murderous thickets of Maremma, where escaped galley-slaves hid amongst the boxwood and the bearberry, and lived in caves and hollow trees, no physical alarm moved him as he strode on across the uneven ground, with the familiar scents and sounds of a woodland night around him on every side.

The moon had now risen so high that the valleys were bathed in her light and the sky was radiant with a brilliancy which seemed but a more ethereal day.

He had no eyes for its beauty. His whole soul was consumed by the horror of his errand. He only looked up at the pointers and the pole star which he knew so as to guide himself by them across the hills to the church, for he had left the cart-tracks and mule-paths and struck perforce through the gorse and undergrowth westward, gradually ascending as he went.

"Poor mother ! poor mother !" he kept saying to himself. It seemed horrible to him to go and molest her out there in her last sleep and take those things which were buried with her. Would she know ? Would she awake ? Would she rise and strike him ?

Then he thought of a dead woman whom he had found once in the "macchia" in Maremma, lying unburied under some myrtle bushes ; he remembered how hideous she had looked, how the ants and worms had eaten her, how the wild boars had gnawed her flesh, how the jaws had grinned and the empty eyeballs had stared, and how a black toad had sat on her breast.

Would his mother look like that ?

No ; for she was safe under ground, under sacred ground, shut up secure from wind and weather in that deal shell which he had himself made and hammered down ; and she was in her clothes, all neat and proper, and the holy oil had been upon her.

No, she had been put in her grave like a Christian, witch though they said that she was. She could not look like the woman in Maremma who had been a vagrant and a gypsy.

Yet he was afraid—horribly afraid.

(To be continued.)

ALAS!

Written by Dr. McDONALD.

Composed by J. SPAWFORTH.

VOICE. *Moderato.* *p*

A - las, how ea - si - ly things go wrong, A

PIANO. *mp* *p*

sigh too much, or a kiss too long, And there fol-lows a mist and a weep - ing

rain. And life is nev-er the

lunga pausa. *lunga pausa.*

same . . . a - gain. A -

poco rit. *a tempo.* *colla voce.* *mp*

las, how hard - ly things go right! 'Tis hard to watch in a sum - mernight; For the

The first system of the musical score for 'ALAS!'. It features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: 'las, how hard - ly things go right! 'Tis hard to watch in a sum - mernight; For the'.

sigh will come, and the kiss will stay, And the sum - mernight is a win - ter day, Is a

The second system of the musical score. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: 'sigh will come, and the kiss will stay, And the sum - mernight is a win - ter day, Is a'. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

win - ter day, . . . a win - ter

The third system of the musical score. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: 'win - ter day, . . . a win - ter'. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*, and crescendo/decrescendo hairpins.

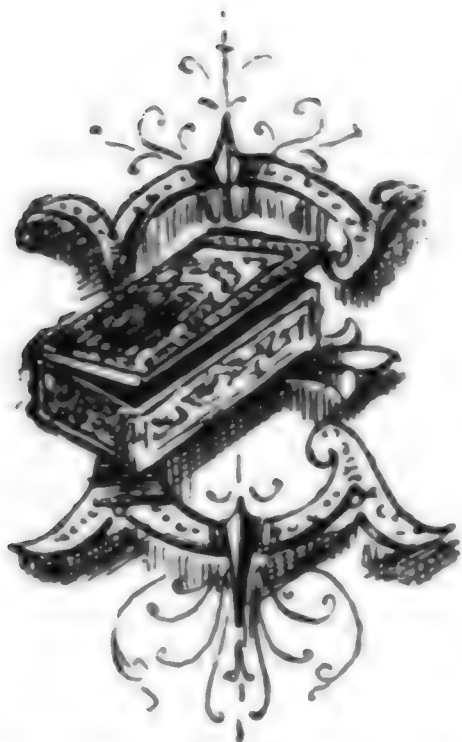
day. . . .

The fourth system of the musical score. The vocal line concludes with the lyrics: 'day. . . .'. The piano accompaniment features a *mf* marking and ends with a final cadence.

Revelations of a London Pawnbroker.

No. 3.—Montagu Stanton, Thought Reader and Spiritualist.

By PAUL SETON.



VERY attentive reader of English literature is well acquainted with the curious fact that at certain recurring periods our national institutions have to pass through a perfect epidemic of depreciatory writing. It is singular, but it is so. Just now the fashion has set in strongly amongst scribes of a certain sort to lose no possible opportunity of decrying the ability and sneering at the intelligence of the administration of Scotland Yard. To listen to some of these gentlemen, one might reasonably suppose that it was a customary thing now-a-days to recruit the ranks of our detective police from the county lunatic asylums. Under no other hypothesis is it possible to explain the imbecile conduct of these officials, as set forth in some of the popular detective stories of the hour. To those who, like myself, know anything of the inner working of the "Yard," all this is, of course, highly amusing, but, at the same time, it is a trifle misleading to the general public. The truth is, no finer force for the detection of crime than that organised and directed by Scotland Yard exists in the world. The ridiculous private detective of modern fiction is never to be met with in actual life, and an exceedingly good thing, too. If he ever should be ill-advised enough to put in an appearance in the future, woe betide him! We are a very patient and long-suffering people, but even we know where to draw the line on occasion.

One hot summer's morning—it was in the middle of July, and the sun was blazing fiercely out of a cloudless sky—I was busily occupied in my private office, cataloguing for sale by auction an unusually heavy and important collection of forfeited property. The light streamed through the barred window upon the large table in the centre of the room, and the costly jewels with which it was covered sparkled and danced gaily under the powerful rays. I had given strict orders that I was not to be disturbed, except on pressing business, and had just taken up a superbly-ornamented sword, presented in years gone by to a famous admiral by his admiring countrymen after a brilliant engagement, when my manager entered, with the information that Inspector Bennett would like to see me for a few minutes, if I was not busy. I was busy, but Bennett and I were old acquaintances, and however much I might feel inclined at times to deny myself to other people, to him I was always visible. He entered, wiping his forehead with his handkerchief, and, remarking that it was very hot, seated himself by the table, and gazed at the glittering heaps upon it.

"That's rather nice," he observed, picking out a fine diamond and sapphire cross, and holding it up in the brilliant light. "Fetch some money, too, I dare say."

"About £300," I rejoined, somewhat shortly, for I was anxious to get on with my work. "But I suppose you didn't call specially this morning to admire my unredeems, did you? What's the particular news this time?"

Bennett looked at me with a quiet smile, as he replaced the cross on the table. "No," he said, "you are quite right. I didn't come here for a private view of

your out-of-time jewellery. I merely came to tell you that in the course of an hour or so you will have another addition to your already long list of distinguished customers."

"Indeed!" I replied, in some surprise. "As you seem to be so particularly well-informed to-day, may I venture to enquire the name of this important person?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Bennett calmly, in no way disturbed by the slightly bantering tone I had adopted. "He is called Le Prince Stanilas Poniakraski."

"Poniakraski!" I ejaculated, now really astonished; "the rich Russian prince! Are you quite certain your information is correct?"

"Did you ever find it incorrect?" retorted Mr. Bennett, answering my question by propounding another. "The Prince will be here shortly, but not with the object of negotiating a loan. On the contrary, he will redeem from you a certain gold snuff-box, set with brilliants, upon which you advanced the sum of £100 to one Frederick Bouverie on the 20th of last month."

My dealings with the remarkable man who sat quietly before me were, like the younger Mr. Weller's knowledge of the Metropolis, both extensive and peculiar. We had been enabled to mutually assist each other on several occasions, and the utmost confidence prevailed between us. He was well known as the shrewdest, as well as the most cautious, of all the clear-headed and keen-witted 'tecs employed at the "Yard," and, therefore, I had no hesitation in complying with the request which followed, although, of course, in the ordinary way of business I should have at once declined.

"I should like to have a look at that snuff-box for a minute, Mr. Stephens, if you've no objection."

I rang the bell and gave the necessary order, and the box being produced, Mr. Bennett examined it with close attention. It was a handsome article, about three inches in length and two in width, the lid being encircled with diamonds, while in the centre was the letter A, surmounted by an imperial crown in the same precious stones. Mr. Bennett shook it, pressed it, tapped it, struck it lightly all over with his finger and thumb, squeezed the ends gently together in his palms, and handed it back with an air of dissatisfaction.

"Well?" I said, interrogatively.



EXAMINED IT WITH CLOSE ATTENTION.

"I have good reasons for believing that box conceals an important document, but I am, unfortunately, not acquainted with the secret of how to get at it."

"Really!" said I, getting interested. "Suppose I have a try." I was equally unsuccessful, however; all the ordinary methods known to the expert proving utterly useless. It still appeared to be a richly decorated snuff-box, but nothing more. I was just saying as much when the door opened, and my manager appeared twirling a card between his fingers. I took it and read—"Le Prince Stanilas Poniakraski."

"Very good," I said, passing the card on to Bennett. "I'll see him directly."

"This came about five minutes ago, sir," said my manager, handing me a telegram. I opened it. It was as follows:

"I am lying at 72, Barton Street, Blackfriars, seriously injured. Pray come and see me at once. Very urgent. Bouverie."

I passed this on likewise to Bennett. He read it in silence, and then rose.

"I'll call again to-morrow morning, I think, Mr. Stephens," he said slowly. "I presume you'll go and see this unfortunate gentleman?"

"I suppose I had better do so," I replied reflectively. "It's very curious, though, that he should get injured just as someone else is coming to redeem his snuff-box, especially if your idea is correct."

"Very curious indeed," said Mr. Bennett abruptly. "But, you know, you needn't mention your intended visit to the Prince. In fact, I shouldn't, if I were you." And with this advice, he departed, leaving me to my interview with my distinguished visitor.

Prince Poniakraski was smoking a delicately perfumed cigarette through a dainty amber mouthpiece, tipped with gold, as I entered the room into which he had been shown. He was a tall, dark man, apparently about fifty, of imposing appearance, and exquisitely dressed in the prevailing fashion, yet not obtrusively so. His voice was soft and pleasant, and his manner perfection itself. He was reputed to be immensely rich, and it was certain that he moved in the highest circles of society. He was at some pains to explain the reason of his call:

"Bouverie was, in a measure, a sort of *protégé* of mine," he said, with a melancholy smile, "and I really got to be very much attached to him. I cannot imagine why he did not apply to me when he found himself in want of money. I would have given it to him gladly, poor fellow. I feel I am only fulfilling his wishes in taking possession of this snuff-box, which he valued highly on account of its associations, and I shall only be too happy to pay you for any other little trinkets which he may have entrusted to your care, if you will be good enough to let me know the amount."

"That I am afraid I cannot do," I replied, "without Mr. Bouverie's authority."

"Ah! What you ask is impossible," said the Prince, with a slight elevation of the eyebrows. "He will never be able to do so. He is dead!"

"Dead!" I exclaimed, completely taken off my guard. "Surely not! Why, I had a telegram from him only a few moments ago!"

Directly the incautious words had passed my lips, I could have bitten off my tongue for having given utterance to them. The Prince looked at me attentively.

"I think you must

be mistaken," he said quietly. "Would you mind showing me the message?"

"I—er—believe I have destroyed it," I stammered in confusion, as I thought of Bennett's parting words, and cursed my precipitation inwardly. The Prince continued to regard me steadfastly. His voice seemed to me to be a little harder when he next spoke.

"Mr. Stephens, I have already said I believe you are mistaken. It is a pity you destroyed that telegram; but after all, it does not so very much matter. Depend upon it, I am much more likely to be rightly informed on this subject than yourself. I beg of you to understand from me that you will never see Bouverie again in this world, and"—here the voice became low and thrilling—"if you are well-advised you will never attempt to do so."

My astonishment at this extraordinary speech was so great that I felt incapable of returning any suitable reply, and therefore remained silent. The Prince took some notes from his pocket-book, and counted them over slowly twice. I fancied he did this in order to give me an opportunity of speaking. Finding I did not avail myself of it, he laid the money down on the table and took up the box.

"What I have spoken to you just now," he said, uttering every word with great deliberation and distinctness, "I have spoken in all seriousness. Believe me, you will do well to give heed to it. There are certain matters which are best left alone by those not immediately concerned. This is one of them, if you will pardon my saying so. You see, I am perfectly frank with you. I wish you good-morning." And with this admonition, his highness left me to digest his meaning at my leisure.

It was late in the afternoon when I set out for Blackfriars, and after some trouble, succeeded in discovering Barton Street. It was a dirty, disreputable little street, composed of tumbledown tenements, principally occupied by working men. I knocked at number 72, and en-



"YOU WILL DO WELL TO GIVE HEED TO IT."

quired of the untidy-looking woman who opened the door, if I could see Mr. Bouverie. The woman stared, and then asked if I meant the gentleman who had met with an accident. I replied in the affirmative. Then I couldn't. The doctor had ordered him to the hospital a couple of hours or so ago, and he had been taken away in a hearse. She evidently meant an ambulance, but I did not stop to correct her. Could she tell me which hospital? No, she couldn't. Or the name of the doctor, then? She didn't remember. Had the gentleman left any message? Not that she knew of. Was there anyone else who could tell me? No, there wasn't. Had he been there long? Since the night before last. Was he much hurt? Broken leg, she believed. And that was all the information I could obtain.

When Bennett called the next day I repeated to him the conversation which had taken place between the Prince and myself. He looked grave, and his seriousness by no means diminished as I went on to relate the unsuccessful issue of my visit to Blackfriars. He was evidently annoyed, and it was with some hesitation that I ventured to enquire at length if he thought there was any connection between the two circumstances. He replied briefly that it was not improbable. His manner was not encouraging, but I could no longer refrain from asking him if he knew how the Prince came to take such an interest in the affairs of Mr. Bouverie.

"My knowledge of this particular case," he answered thoughtfully, "is incomplete at present, and, therefore, I can only speak in general terms —"

"Then there is a case," I interrupted.

"Certainly. And a rather unusual one, too," he added, after a moment's reflection. "I may as well tell you at once that there is, at the present time, a very formidable conspiracy on foot, having for its object nothing less than the complete annihilation of the reigning dynasty of Russia at one blow. The ramifications of the plot are endless, and the headquarters of the conspirators, which are shifted continually, being just now in London, the Metropolis is full of the Czar's secret police busily engaged in tracing the conspiracy to its source. As, however, many of the highest among the Russian nobility are supposed to be implicated, the class of agents employed for their detection by the Russian authorities is of a very superior

character. As a consequence of this, it is difficult to determine accurately sometimes who is conspirator and who detective. This applies especially with regard to Prince Poniakraski, who is a very sphinx in the matter of inscrutability. That is why I do not care to speak positively at this juncture with reference to his relations with Mr. Bouverie."

"But," I objected, "there is nothing in all this to constitute a case that I can see."

Bennett smiled. "Perhaps not," he said, looking at his watch, "but I may be able to tell you more in the course of a few days, and then you will not unlikely think differently. Now I must be off. You know where to communicate with me if anything fresh occurs." And he went his way, leaving me as hopelessly perplexed as ever.

I made an effort to banish the subject from my thoughts, saying to myself that it was no concern of mine, but I met with sorry success. Whatever I did and wherever I went, I found my mind continually reverting to it until, by merely closing my eyes, I could almost fancy myself at the theatre, watching the progress of some absorbing play. I even got so far as to give the piece a title, and "The Prince, the Snuff-box, and the Man with the Broken Leg," ridiculously suggestive of pantomime though it was, became a sort of actual reality to me. But I had not completed the cast. I had omitted two of the principals. I had left out the Princess and — Montagu Stanton, Thought Reader and Spiritualist.

The latter entered upon the scene very quietly, as was his wont. There was nothing of bustle, or noise, or excitement about Montagu Stanton. He breathed an atmosphere of serene calm, which seemed to permeate his whole being, and even diffused itself around those with whom he was brought into contact. He was the most restful man I ever knew. No matter how high the storm of life might rage without, he remained unmoved, perfectly peaceful and unconcerned. Yet even he could not exist without the adventitious aid of money, and Montagu Stanton's visits to me had been by no means infrequent of late. This time his requirements were larger than usual; but as the security was ample, I experienced no difficulty in satisfying them. At the conclusion of our business, he shook hands with me after his



TOOK MY HAND AGAIN INTO HIS.

customary fashion, but somewhat to my surprise he did not immediately relinquish mine, but retained it for some moments in his grasp. At last he let go his hold with a little sigh, and said :

"So you've been thinking of him, too! His influence seems to be very great."

"Thinking of whom?" I asked in astonishment, for I was entirely unprepared for such a remark.

"Why, of Prince Poniakraski, of course," he replied. "Do you know it is distinctly curious, but you are the fourth person I have met to-day whose thoughts have been more or less occupied by the proceedings of that extraordinary man."

"Ah! so you are favouring me, then, with a private exhibition of your celebrated thought-reading powers, Mr. Stanton," I said, forcing a little laugh in order to hide my confusion.

Mr. Stanton made no direct answer, but took my hand again into his, and held it firmly for another minute. There was a peculiar expression in his face when he did speak.

"Mr. Stephens, I see you are acquainted with the existence of the great conspiracy. Now let me warn you against the danger you will incur by any intermeddling with its progress, either one way or the other. Your life itself may not be safe if you disregard this advice. There are powerful forces at work, of which you know nothing. You are a prudent man; do not lightly forget my words. Should you, however, be so unfortunate as to find yourself involved in any way, do not hesitate to come immediately to me—you have my address—and I may possibly be able to render you some

service. There are not many men to whom I would say as much, but you once conferred a favour upon me, which I have never forgotten, and I am not ungrateful. Remember what I have said—come to me at once, and if I can help you, I will."

Another warning! What did it all mean? I knew nothing of this great conspiracy, save the little Bennett had told me, and here it was being hinted all round that my very life would be endangered if I didn't take the greatest care! I had not the slightest intention of either aiding or denouncing any of the actors, or of mixing myself up in their affairs at all, and yet twice within the same week had I been distinctly and solemnly warned. Again I asked myself what it all meant! I am naturally the reverse of a nervous man, but this sort of thing was by no means pleasant. Indeed, it was decidedly objectionable, and I vigorously anathematised the entire business from the bottom of my heart.

A fortnight elapsed, and nothing further transpired of an unusual character. I heard no more of Bouverie. Bennett, I ascertained, had suddenly betaken himself to Paris. Prince Poniakraski, I learnt from the columns of the *Morning Post*, had been present at an official dinner given by the Russian Ambassador, and had afterwards attended a brilliant reception at the Princess Tzavosna's. I began to reflect how easily mountains were sometimes made out of molehills, and how possible it was that, after all, I might have been mistaken, when all these comfortable thoughts were blown to the four winds of heaven, by an entirely unexpected occurrence. This was nothing less than a visit from the Princess Tzavosna herself.

The Princess Tzavosna was certainly one of the most beautiful women it was ever my fortune to behold. Slightly above the medium height, with a wealth of that rich golden hair one so often reads of but so seldom sees, and which served as a sort of glorified frame to a face perfect in its delicate outline—she looked every inch a princess as she stood before me in my office that burning summer's morn. Notwithstanding the great heat—and it was almost unbearable in its intensity—she was dressed entirely in black, and I noticed that, in spite of her outward self-possession, there was a tremor in her voice that betrayed some emotion when she spoke.

"You are, then, Mr. Stephens?" she said interrogatively, as I handed her a

chair, and waited for her to unfold the object of her visit.

I bowed affirmatively, and she proceeded quickly, without further preface, to address to me a whole series of questions concerning the subject which had been uppermost in my thoughts of late.

"I believe," she commenced, in soft, musical accents, "you know Mr. Frederick Bouverie?"

I intimated that I had that honour.

"You have had business transactions with him?"

"Mr. Bouverie has sometimes been a customer of mine," I replied cautiously.

"And you have advanced him money? Is it not so?" she continued, toying nervously with her hands.

"Pardon me, madame," I said, in a decided tone, "but you must see how impossible it is for me to answer such a question. My clients' affairs —"

"Yes, yes, I know," she interrupted, with an impatient gesture. "Your clients' secrets are sacred, of course. But this is an entirely different matter. Mr. Bouverie, let me tell you, is a very dear personal friend of mine, and it is in his interests that I make this enquiry of you."

"And it is equally in his interests, madame," I replied firmly, "that I am obliged to refuse you the information you request."

The Princess darted a keen glance at me out of her brilliant eyes, and tapped her tiny foot angrily upon the floor.

"Excuse me, Mr. Stephens," she said, haughtily, "but do you know who I am?"

"I have the honour to address Madame la Princesse Tzavosna, I believe," I returned, somewhat stiffly, for I felt annoyed at the imperious manner she had suddenly adopted.

"Then you must know that it is a dangerous thing to trifle with me, sir," she exclaimed, bringing her slender hand down

with considerable force upon the table before her. "I demand of you if you have had of Mr. Bouverie a gold snuff-box, set with diamonds and bearing upon the lid an imperial crown above the letter A?"

I looked at the lovely face of the woman who sat confronting me, and wondered mentally if all that I had heard concerning her could by any possibility be true. She could scarcely have reached her twenty-fifth year, and yet she had twice been married, and twice been left a widow; and both her husbands had died violent—and rumour would persistently have it, unnatural—deaths. And rumour, moreover, would not be denied that she was an active and leading member of more than

one secret revolutionary society, aiming at the total overthrow of all existing forms of law and order. And then I thought of the pale, delicate, fragile form of Frederick Bouverie, and wondered again what might be the nature of the relations existing between the two.

As all these things were passing rapidly through my mind, I became conscious of a very peculiar sensation. I am unable to describe its precise nature,

but I know I felt an irresistible, overwhelming impulse to terminate this interview at once. Then, as the eyes of the Princess—and she had most beautiful eyes—remained steadily fixed upon me, another and antagonistical feeling seemed to rise within me, and fight desperately with the other for supremacy. As this latter feeling, urging me strangely to tell everything I knew, struggled with my intense longing to get away, somehow, from the light of those piercing eyes, I was reduced to utter dumbness. I don't believe I could have spoken a word to save my life. At length the contest ceased as suddenly as it commenced, and the Princess rose, with wrath upon every feature of her face.



MADAME LA PRINCESSE TZAVOSNA.

"You have triumphed, Mr. Stephens," she said, and there was a curious metallic ring in her voice, "but only for a time. You have placed your will in opposition to mine, and no man has ever yet succeeded in doing that with impunity. You have refused to answer my questions; listen, now, and understand what your refusal means."

She paused for a moment, as though considering the words she should employ, and then went on.

"It may be a surprise to you to learn that Mr. Bouverie is my affianced husband. Ah! you are astonished; nevertheless I tell you such is the fact. No matter how he became so; that is our affair alone. He is young, ardent and a hater of oppression. I, too, am the bitter enemy of tyranny and wrong, and associating in the same great cause of freedom, we were not long in discovering that our hopes and aspirations were identical. I knew that he was far from being rich—your literary men, especially those who have to write for your daily papers, seldom are so, I believe—and I knew likewise that he was also very proud. Willingly would I have placed my purse at his disposal, but I did not dare; he would have regarded it as an insult. When I would talk to him of these things, he would laugh, and say he could always get as much money as he required. I used to marvel how, and then I found out—never mind in what way—it was to you he would have recourse on these occasions. Silly fellow! if he would only have trusted me! Before he went to the Continent the other day, I called at his rooms, and I missed his beautiful snuff-box. It was not in its usual place, and when I asked him where it was, he seemed embarrassed, and said that as he was going abroad, he had given it to a friend for greater safety. Then I knew, foolish boy, that he had been to you. And now that he is returning, I wanted him to have a pleasant surprise—to find in its old position his little vanished box. You will assist me in my harmless fancy, will you not? You have a kind face—you will not refuse to humour me in this whim."

The transformation was marvellous. The haughty, wrathful princess had disappeared as if by magic, and in her place there stood before me a bewitching creature, half smiling, half pouting, and altogether charming! It was fascinating, delicious, like some delightful fairy-tale of

old! I was hesitating, yielding—I was about to tell her everything—when again there came over me, like a mighty wave, that strange, mysterious sensation, urging, demanding, impelling me to immediately end this scene. It was useless to resist its influence. I struggled against it feebly for a minute, and then yielded completely to its power.

"I regret exceedingly, madame," I began unsteadily, and my voice sounded as though it belonged to another person, "but what you ask is, unfortunately, entirely beyond my power. The box itself is no longer in my possession ——"

The words had barely passed my lips when she turned upon me like a veritable fury.

"Liar!" she exclaimed, white with rage. "Do you dare to mock me? There is a stronger will than mine, I see, behind you; but beware! I will, all the same, succeed, and you shall know to your sorrow what it is to have denied a Tzavosna! I leave you now. Do not think that I shall also forget. We shall meet again, and then we shall see!" And, hurling this prophecy at my head, like a goddess of evil, she swept passionately from the room.

As soon as she had gone, I sank back exhausted in my chair. Something—some vital essence—seemed to have departed from me, and left me weak and helpless. My head was splitting, so I decided to rest the remainder of the morning and endeavour to recuperate. I was fated, however, to be disturbed—peace was evidently not for me that day. But I gave a great sigh of satisfaction, nevertheless, when I found that the new comer was none other than Bennett, fresh and jolly from his trip to Paris. I opened the vials of my wrath upon him gladly. It was some relief to my overcharged feelings to be able to tell an official representative of the law how I, a prominent and law-abiding citizen, was being openly threatened with all sorts of unknown and fearful penalties for merely presuming to do my duty, and this, moreover, in broad daylight and under the very nose of Scotland Yard itself. Bennett listened with a sympathetic grin to the recital of my woes, and after laughingly offering me an unlimited amount of police protection in case of need, assumed his most businesslike face, and I knew that at last I was about to be enlightened concerning the great conspiracy.

"When I last saw you, Mr. Stephens," began Bennett, speaking in that calm, dry, matter-of-fact tone which I knew well from long experience betokened that he had tackled his case, and held the solution in his hands, "I was unable to tell you more than the bare fact that there existed a powerful organisation secretly working in this city for the overthrow of the present form of government at St. Petersburg. You, no doubt, guessed from what had previously transpired that the snuff-box deposited with you by Mr. Bouverie, and redeemed by Prince Poniakraski, had not a little to do with the matter. You were right: it had. You will remember that the box bore the letter A, surmounted by the imperial Russian crown, both being composed of brilliants. The box itself was innocent enough, and the letter likewise, but the mounting of the crown concealed a cypher, photographically reduced, of the very highest importance. You are probably aware that some time ago Mr. Bouverie, in his capacity of a special correspondent, was sent to the Russian capital by one of our influential papers, charged with the mission of describing, in the peculiarly flowery language which it affects, the course of fashionable life on the banks of the Neva. In this he succeeded so well that on his departure from St. Petersburg the Czar manifested his approbation by presenting him with a gold snuff-box set with diamonds."

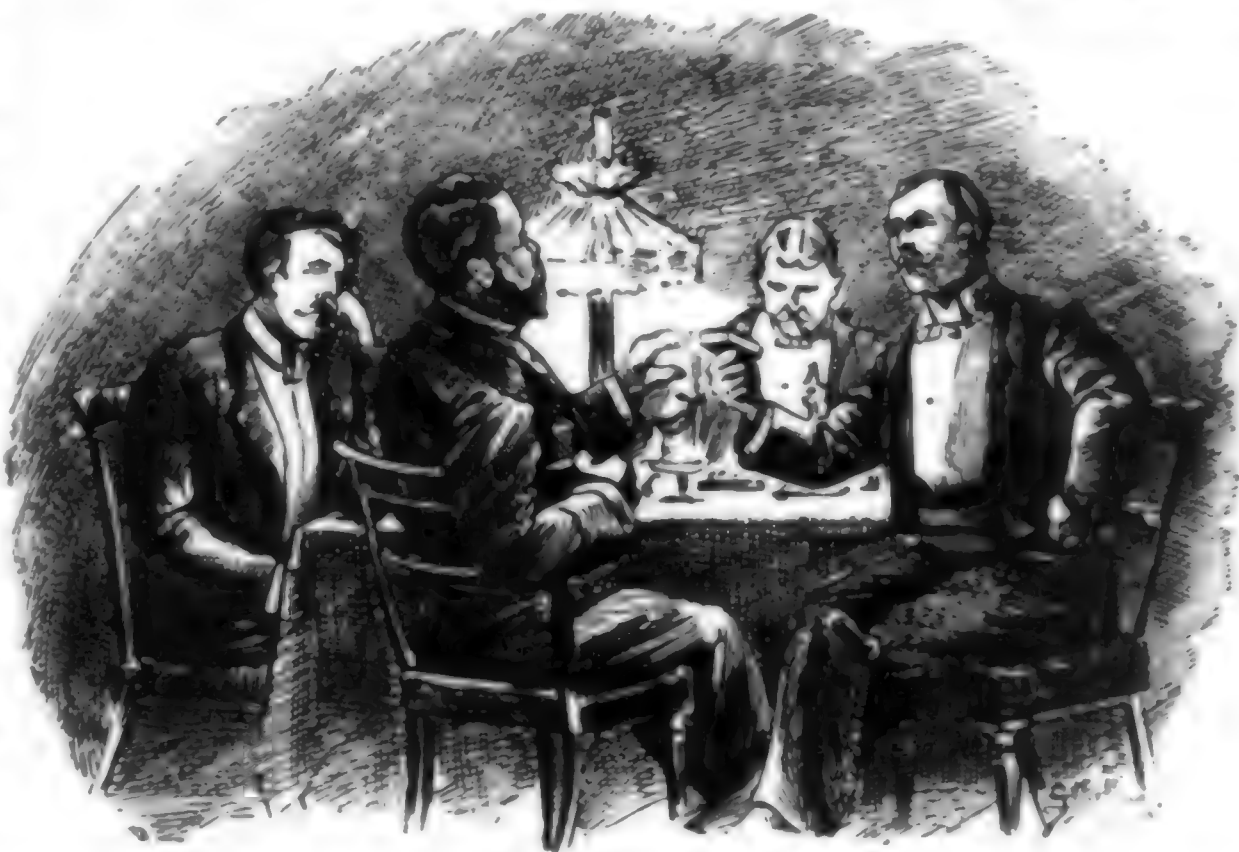
"Which he afterwards deposited with me," I interrupted at this point.

"Which he afterwards did nothing of the sort," continued the imperturbable Bennett, calmly pursuing his narrative. "Well, the night before he left the dominions of the Czar, Mr. Bouverie invited a few of his newly-made Russian friends to a little supper party, during which the box was handed round for inspection, duly admired, and—changed; a precisely similar one, with the important difference that it concealed a dangerous Nihilist cypher, being substituted in its place. A letter

was at the same time addressed to the Princess Tzavosna in London, apparently on ordinary matters, but in reality informing her of what had been done, and instructing her to get possession of the box on its arrival here. This letter, like all others directed to the Princess from Russia, was opened by the authorities there, and instead of being forwarded to her, a copy was sent on to Prince Poniakraski, together with imperative orders to secure the cypher at all hazards."

"Rather foolish of the Princess's friends to send such a letter," I remarked: "they might have known it was sure to be opened."

"Not altogether so foolish as you may imagine. It was so cleverly put together,



WAS HANDED ROUND FOR INSPECTION.

and the meaning so dexterously hidden, that it really appeared quite an innocent little epistle, the more especially that the writer was General Stromkoff, the commandant of the St. Petersburg garrison, and the uncle of the Princess."

"Then Prince Poniakraski is —"

"The chief of the Russian secret police. When the conspirators shifted their headquarters to London the Prince thought it advisable to come over here and personally watch their proceedings, and with such consummate skill has he conducted himself that at this very moment the revolutionists believe him to be one of the most devoted members of their fraternity. Bouverie was provided with an introduction to the Princess, of which he in due course availed himself, and it was in her *salon* that he first met Prince Poniakraski. All the en-

deavours, however, of the Prince to obtain even a sight of the snuff-box signally failed, as well they might, seeing that the fashionable journalist no longer had it himself, but had entrusted it to a certain gentleman named Stephens for greater safety—and a trifling matter of one hundred pounds in hard cash."

Here Bennett paused, mopped his face with his handkerchief, interpolated a casual remark to the effect that it was very warm, helped himself to some water from a carafe which stood upon the table, and resumed:

"The Prince, finding all his efforts futile, and being, moreover, stimulated to prompt action by further advices from St. Petersburg, at last had recourse to a desperate expedient. One night, or rather one morning, the unfortunate pressman, on returning home from Fleet Street, was suddenly set upon by three men, speedily overpowered in spite of his resistance, and rendered unconscious by a heavy blow on the head. When he came to his senses, he found himself lying in a wretched little house, covered with bruises, and, in addition, with a broken leg; later on he made the discovery that his pocket-book was gone, and remembering that it contained the voucher relating to the snuff-box, contrived to get off the telegram which you received whilst I was with you. When you—excuse my saying so—were incautious enough, in spite of my hint, to mention the receipt of this telegram to the Prince, he immediately caused his victim to be removed to the house of one of his servants, where brain fever supervened and made such rapid progress that before the expiration of the week he was dead."

"Dead!" I exclaimed. "Then the Prince was right after all. He said I should never see him again. Poor Bouverie!"

"Yes," assented Bennett calmly. "He was a very unlucky man; but when one gets mixed up with Nihilists one must expect that sort of thing. However, to finish

the story. The Terrorists in the Russian capital, becoming uneasy at the absence of news from the Princess, deputed one of their number to come over here and ascertain the reason of her silence. Yesterday Bouverie's rooms were ransacked, and then—well, then the Princess came to you."



FOUND HIMSELF LYING IN A WRETCHED LITTLE HOUSE.

"Her story was, therefore——?" I paused, and looked at Bennett.

"An exceedingly clever, but entirely unscrupulous piece of mendacity from beginning to end," was the unmoved reply. "The only part at all approximating the truth was the statement that Bouverie, like most other men, I believe, was by no means insensible to her charms"

"Then they were not engaged to be married?"

Bennett laughed. "I can't imagine the Princess at all the sort of woman to marry an impecunious newspaper man under any circumstances," he said. "Indeed I should rather think she had quite enough of other matters on her hands just now without bothering herself with anything of that sort."

I was silent for a minute. "How did you find all this out?" I asked.

"By assiduously following up every shred of information I could obtain. In the first place, the Prince has been carefully watched ever since his arrival in England."

"What!" I exclaimed, "the head of the Russian secret police shadowed by Scotland Yard! That's funny!"

"Very; but it's a fact all the same. There have been some curious things happening in this city of late, of which the general public know nothing, but which have not escaped the close attention of the 'Yard.' The Russian police are by no means friendly disposed towards the English authorities, and all the knowledge we possess of the movements of the Terrorists is due to our own initiative, supplemented by the assistance we receive from time to time from the various Continental bureaus,

and more especially the French. We are, therefore, obliged in some cases to watch both criminal and detective alike, and this applies particularly to the Prince, whose real position is even now none too well defined. You see, a man may be both conspirator and police agent at the same time, and one never knows for certain whether he is more of one than the other. Accordingly, Andrade, one of our brightest and most promising men—you know Andrade?—I nodded—“was told off to specially observe the Prince, and the fellow was actually clever enough to get a situation in his establishment. We have been compelled to adopt these precautionary measures in consequence of the many mysterious and sudden deaths—chiefly amongst foreigners residing in London—which have taken place recently, and which we cannot but regard as being in great measure attributable to the influence of a powerful secret society. It was Andrade who first discovered the anxiety of the Prince regarding the invisible snuff-box, and it was Andrade, moreover, who subsequently was enabled to obtain, during a brief but providential indisposition on the part of his master, a copy of the cypher, duly enlarged and translated into excellent French.”

“And what was it, after all?” I burst out, with irrepressible curiosity.

“It was,” replied Bennett, solemnly, “a list of suspected traitors to the cause, and the death warrant of the Executive Committee at St. Petersburg for the removal of five of the most dangerous of such suspects.”

“Great heavens!” I exclaimed, a cold thrill of horror creeping slowly down my back; “do you know who they are?”

A needless question, of course. Instead of answering, Bennett laid a small piece of paper before me. My hand shook a little as I took it up and read:

“The Executive Committee of the Inner Circle, at St. Petersburg, has condemned the following to death for disloyalty to the Holy Cause:

Stanilas Poniakraski,
Vladimir Varanoff,
Ivan Sobrovna,
Alphonse Rouget,
Montagu Stanton.”

“Montagu Stanton!” I repeated aloud, with a cry of astonishment; “why, I know him well! How does he come to be mixed

up in this infernal conspiracy? What on earth has he done?”

Bennett shook his head. “I really cannot say; but, as you know him, perhaps you will be good enough to put him on his guard. The Prince will receive an intimation from the Home Office to-day that the Government will be glad if he will take his departure from England as speedily as possible. Varanoff and Sobrovna have already left the country; and Rouget has been in Paris for some time past. Their blood, therefore, will not be upon our heads if they fall beneath the vengeance of the Terrorists. The Princess I expect to arrest to-night.”

“Arrest the Princess! On whatever charge? I thought the law took no cognizance of political offences committed outside this country?”

“Neither does it, but it does of murder, though; and the extradition of the Princess has been formally demanded by the Russian Government for the murder of her second husband, Prince Sergius Tzavosna, on the 25th of January last, in the Nevski Prospekt. I am only waiting for the necessary papers from St. Petersburg, which should be here this evening. And now I must be off. You have heard everything, and there’s a heap of arrears at the ‘Yard’ which I must attend to at once.”

Long after Bennett had left I remained thinking over the strange story to which I had listened that morning. The afternoon glided unconsciously away, and the hot summer’s day was slowly turning into night before I roused myself from my reverie, and started off towards Bayswater to tell Montagu Stanton of the sentence pronounced against him. The air was heavy with heat, and when I reached the Marble Arch the lightning was sheening fitfully in the murky sky. Now and again the park would be weirdly illuminated by a vivid white glare that only rendered more intense the succeeding blackness, while the low, heavy roll of thunder in the distance heralded portentously the advancing storm. Once or twice I fancied I was being followed, but this I put down to my state of high, nervous tension; and I arrived at Stanton’s residence without interruption. He welcomed me with the remark that he was glad to see me, adding that he had been expecting me all the evening.

“It was a hard battle you had with the Princess this morning, was it not?” he

said with a smile as soon as I was seated. "Her will is very potent, but, as she discovered, mine is the stronger of the two."

"I scarcely understand you," I replied, in some bewilderment.

"No? Yet you were conscious, were you not, of the struggle which took place when she endeavoured to make you answer her questions regarding the snuff-box?"

"Ah!" I exclaimed, as I began to have a glimmering of the truth, "this is, then, the explanation! It was your will working through me in opposition to the Princess's! Is it not so?"

Stanton smiled again. "Yes," he said softly, "I was obliged to take that liberty. I knew that if I did not intervene, you would be powerless against her wiles."

"You know the princess, then?"

"It is my misfortune to know her only too well. Who, indeed, should know her if not I? A man should never cease to remember perfectly the woman who has ruined his life."

No fitting reply rose to my lips, and I remained silent. A heavy peal of thunder reverberated through the room, and Stanton, rising, walked to the window.

"The storm will be severe," he said,

returning to the centre of the apartment, "but my will must be obeyed, and she must come. Shall I show you something while you wait?"

I could merely bow my head in assent, for the faculty of speech seemed to have entirely deserted me. Stanton turned down the lamp, and placed a small bronze dish upon the table, into which he sprinkled a few grains of a reddish-looking powder, and uttered some words in an undertone. One side of the room became gradually obscured with a thick curtain of smoke, which presently rolled away, and then I beheld a curious sight.

In the middle of a scantily-furnished chamber stood a tightly-bound figure, evidently a prisoner. Around a roughly-hewn horseshoe-shaped bench sat a number of men with their faces completely concealed by heavy black cowls. A trial was in progress, and the verdict was then apparently under deliberation. At length the president arose and pronounced the sentence, to which the figure in the centre listened with bended head. Though not a sound issued from the speaker's lips, I knew as well what that sentence was as if I had heard every word of it. It was death. Then the figure was led to one side; there was a brief pause, followed by a little puff of smoke, and, as the body fell, the face turned slightly in my direction, and I saw, with perfect distinctness, the handsome features of Prince Stanilas Poniakraski in their death agony. I closed my eyes for a moment to shut out the horrible scene, and when I opened them again the picture was gone, the lamp was turned up, and Montagu Stanton was standing by the table as calm and impassive as ever.

"What do you think of it?" he asked, in a low voice.

"It is awful!" I ejaculated with a shudder.

"Merely a glimpse into futurity," he returned quietly. "You have just witnessed what fate has in store for the present chief of the Russian secret police. But hush! She comes!"

There was a blinding flash of lightning, followed immediately by a terrific crash of thunder, during which the handle of the door slowly turned and the Princess Tzavosna, pale and dishevelled, entered the room.

"I am here," she said painfully, fixing her large, wild eyes on Stanton, who stood with folded arms, steadily regarding her;



I BEHELD A CURIOUS SIGHT.

"I am here: what is your will of me?"

"Listen, Feodora Tzavosna," he replied, sternly; "listen attentively, and you shall learn. But first of all let me tell you a little story. It is one that should not be altogether unfamiliar to you, and yet, perhaps, in the giddy whirl of your gay life it may not be so fresh in your memory as it once was. Who knows? Six years ago there was a young

Englishman in Russia who fell desperately in love with a beautiful girl of eighteen. Heaven! how he worshipped her! The ground she trod upon, the very air she breathed, were sacred things in his eyes! There was nothing that he would not have gladly done for her sake—even to the giving up of life itself! They were married. For one brief year they lived in an earthly paradise, and then, as before, in the Eden of old, the serpent, envious of such bliss, entered. The young wife gradually changed: she no longer looked with glances of sweet affection upon her husband, her smiles were directed elsewhere: she had—how can I force myself to utter the shameful words—a lover. Then the devil took possession of her soul. Her lover was rich, powerful, noble: her husband but a poor and obscure Englishman. And so one night, when he, poor fool, was revelling in his dreams of happiness, past, present and to come, she plunged a dagger into his side and left him for dead upon the ground. Then she married her lover. After a while she tired of him likewise. Did she hesitate? Did she, who had already done one murder, pause at another? No! Again the fatal knife was requisitioned, and again a bleeding victim lay stretched at her feet. But her first victim, unlike the second, did not die. A just and offended heaven watched over and protected him, and he lived. His first act on his recovery was to solemnly register a vow that if he were spared long



WE RAISED HER GENTLY

enough he would righteously avenge himself on the faithless woman who had blasted his existence by her wickedness, and driven him out, a lonely wanderer up and down upon the face of the earth. He has fulfilled his vow! Do you mark me, Feodora Tzavosna? I, Montagu Stanton, have fulfilled my vow!"

She did not answer, but her eyes were still fixed with a wild,

despairing look on Stanton's face.

"It is true—every word of it. I have denounced you to the Russian Government as the murderess of Sergius Tzavosna.

She continued to gaze piteously at Stanton for a few moments, and then essayed to speak. The effort was too much for her. Uttering a piercing shriek, she staggered forward, and before we could rush to her assistance, fell heavily upon the floor, the red blood gushing out in two great streams from her nose and mouth. We raised her gently in our arms, and laying her on the sofa, endeavoured to staunch the flow of the life current, but in vain. Her hour was come, and amidst the glare of the lightning, and with the rolling thunder for her Dead March, the guilty soul of the Princess Tzavosna passed away into the Land of Shadows just as Bennett arrived.

"Yes," said Montagu Stanton, after some explanatory conversation, "I know I am marked for death by the Nihilists, but that is a matter which gives me little or no concern. Do not think, Mr. Stephens," he continued, turning to me, "that I am ungrateful to you for your warning, but I was well acquainted beforehand with the danger in which I stood. I shall bury myself in some inaccessible spot, and devote my life to the further study of the occult sciences. It is extremely improbable that you or any of my friends—or enemies—will ever set eyes upon me again in this world."

I, at any rate, never have.

Young England at School.

MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE.

(Continued.)

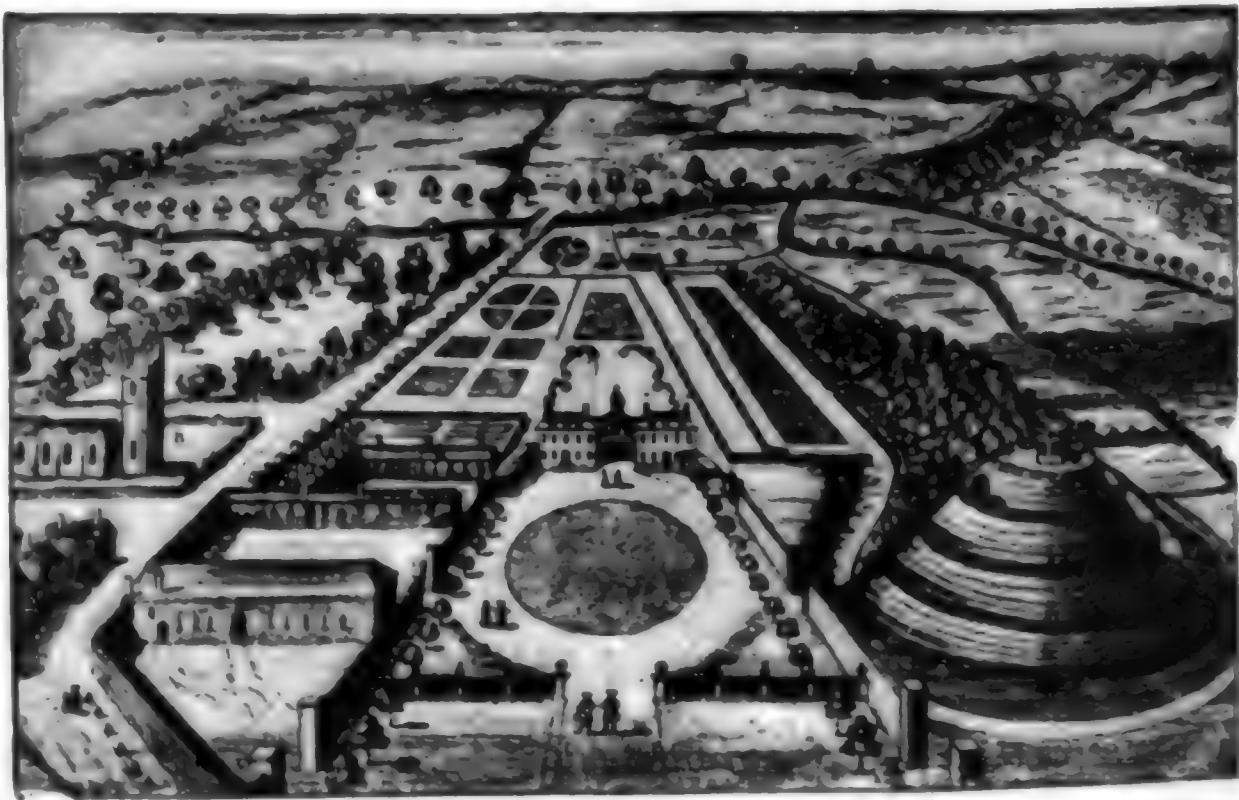


MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE IN 1843.

IN our last number I dwelt rather at length upon the Old Castle Inn and its associations, together with the past Head-masters. This number I shall therefore endeavour to confine to the boys' games, etc.: but first of all I must make some reference to the illustrations we give of the College site, as it appeared in 1723 as Lord Hartford's House, and in 1843 as "Marlborough College."

In the former view my readers will notice the historical Druidical mound, with its winding foot-path, measuring just upon one mile; now the mound is covered with trees, and its summit is reached by steps cut up the side. Behind the Old House, under mark A, is the site of the Roman Castrum, while on the left, marked B, is St. Peter's Church, which has for many years stood a monument in the noble thoroughfare of High Street, Marlborough.

I made but a scant reference to the beautiful chapel at the School. The old chapel was opened in 1848, and, as I have mentioned, was beautifully decorated by Dr. Farrar; in the early eighties, however, the old building was found quite inadequate to cope with the number of boys at the College. With the aid of a Cin-tabernacle, as it was called, erected in the court, and the use of the upper school, the authorities were enabled to rebuild the fine chapel, which was com-



LORD HARTFORD'S HOUSE IN 1723—NOW MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE.

pleted in the Autumn of 1886, and was consecrated by the Bishop of Salisbury on Michaelmas Day. Its style is fourteenth century English Gothic, and the arrangement of the east end is an original feature.

There is a magnificent four manual organ, which is ably manipulated by Mr. Bambridge. The west end is taken up by a beautifully-carved screen, over which is a small gallery, and in the summer, when the doors are thrown open, there is a delightful view over the surrounding country. The College choir, more or less in its present form, dates from the opening of the old chapel, and claims to be one of the first regularly trained and utilised public school choirs.

The concert, at the end of the Winter term, is also an old institution dating from 1848, for it signifies an annual gathering of Marlborough's sons. These concerts were formerly held in the hall, but of late years the upper school has been substituted. The singing of "Auld Lang Syne" at the conclusion of the proceedings is a great feature, when the grey-haired veteran is

found grasping the hand of the piping treble, amidst the greatest enthusiasm and good fellowship. Marlborough boasts of a host of distinguished pupils, particularly amongst our soldiers, Sir Evelyn Wood, Sir George Harman, Sir Chas. McGregor, Sir Edward Bradford, etc. etc., being amongst the most prominent.

The three out-houses, or Boarding Houses, are Preshute, Cotton House and Littlefield.

Preshute was originally the vicarage of the quaint old parish church of Preshute, which stands now part and parcel of the house, as will be seen from our illustration. The "New Houses" (Cotton House and Littlefield) were opened in

April, 1872, a suitable prefect migrating into each from some house in College to help their house-master in nursing them through their infancy. The most striking point in which their arrangements differ from those in College is that they provide studies for all the boys.

With the older Preshute, they have to some extent, an individuality of their own, and the rivalry of "B and C" has changed to a rivalry between College and Out-boarders; though since each house, both in and out of College, preserves its own corporate character, its friendships and enmities, are somewhat more pronounced.

One of the chief out-door sports or exercises at the College is swimming, which



HEAD-MASTER'S RESIDENCE

is compulsory to each boy at Marlborough. Mr. F. H. Hewitt, one of the most popular of her masters, has charge of this department.

Mr. Hewitt has taken the keenest interest in the swimming branch during the seven years he has had charge of the bathing; and when, questioned, he evinced great pleasure in giving me a few leading details.

Assisted by a competent professional—A. Powsey, Champion of Kent, holding also the Humane Society's medal and two clasps—together with a magnificent bathing place, Mr. Hewitt explained to me his system.

By constant attendance at the bathing

place all known swimmers are spotted and marked off in the school alphabetical list. Then the doctor marks those whom he forbids to bathe on medical grounds.

The rest are posted and required to show their swimming powers at certain times; if this request is not complied with, they are personally interviewed. In this way the whole school is gone through and everyone who cannot swim at least twenty yards is put on the learners' list.

The attendance of every boy at his swimming lessons is marked, and, if at all slack, he is also interviewed.

The past season, Mr. Hewitt informed me, had been most gratifying in results, seeing that out of a school of six hundred all except seven can swim at least twenty yards. I happened to walk over to the bath when the learners, ninety-six in number, were exercising, and was almost astonished to see how excellently they performed, and I was soon visibly assured that all could now swim.



BOWLS ON THE MASTER'S GREEN.

The result, it must be remembered, is attained in the summer term alone, and I must here confess that Marlborough has



"LIBERTY HOUR"

one thing wanting—a tepid swimming bath, where that healthy exercise can be indulged in during the winter term as well as during the summer.

At the end of the swimming season there is held a great aquatic gala with numerous contests and scientific swimming displays, and the medal for the best beginner is always the keenest contested item on the programme.

Some great swimmers have migrated from the College bathing place, and one, Lieutenant Granville Monev, the master in charge informed me, won the medal

gained a most prominent position in the world of cricket. Marlborough has contributed some twenty members to the Elevens of Oxford and Cambridge during the past thirty years, and in this respect the School is second only to Eton and Harrow. Some of Oxford's best known players emerged from the West Country College, which has supplied Cambridge with quite the best all-round cricketer that has figured in the elevens of either University, Mr. A. G. Steel.

Marlburians' names have been enrolled in the Elevens of England, and many a



THE BATHING PLACE AND WHITE HORSE MILL.

of the Royal Humane Society last summer for a gallant rescue.

In our illustration of the bath will be seen on the hill-side, the "White Horse," so well known as one of the peculiar features, or marks, on the Bath Road.

Marlborough does not boast so many names inscribed on the scroll of cricketing fame as schools of such ancient and time-honoured traditions as Eton, Harrow, Winchester or Rugby, but it claims to have more than held its own with schools of only fifty summers. Indeed, it has, considering its early trials and misfortunes,

recruit has been sent to represent the Gentlemen of England v. Players. In public school contests it fairly holds its own against its general rivals, although it has to improve before it equalizes with Rugby for the great annual contest. Last year, however, Marlborough scored a most brilliant victory at this fixture, Creedy compiling upwards of two hundred runs, and Mortimer, who made top score this season, made a good century; I have, therefore, selected this group to illustrate this branch of athletics, as I am sure all Marlburians will be proud of their 1892 Team, seeing also that it contains their

respected "Coach," Arthur Hide, of past Sussex County fame.

It would be impossible to pass over Marlborough cricket without some further reference to the most famous of her cricketers, Mr. A. G. Steel.

He first appeared in the school eleven in 1874, more as a fast bowler than for his batting powers. It was not, however, until 1876-7, that he ascended to the position of the Champion of Public School Cricket. During these years he captained the school eleven with such proficiency that he led his school representatives to victory on each occasion, with one exception only. In one match with Cheltenham, it is worthy of record that his forty eight runs were the only points registered from the bat during an innings.

As a bowler he trundled with marvellous judgment, and was as successful in this department as with the willow. As a disciplinarian he quite outrivalled all his predecessors, and established a true enthusiasm in the game in those who had previously shown none. At Cambridge he gained his blue four years, 1878-1881, and captained the eleven in 1880, resigning the sceptre to the Hon. Ivo Bligh in the succeeding year. The great master of cricket, Dr. W. G. Grace, in his treatise on cricket, declares that no more brilliant player ever represented either eleven in the inter-varsity contests since they were instituted, and quotes in confirmation of the statement the fact that his average for his six completed innings was just over thirty, while he took thirty-eight wickets costing only nine runs each.

Mr. Steel's most successful year was in 1878, when he occupied the premier position in the bowling statistics of the year for first-class cricket, amateur or professional.

Following on his marvellous cricket, his name, like that of Grace, has been for years synonymous with the finest of cricket, he has played with remarkable success against Australia, and also captained England's team. As a Lancashire cricketer he has done wonders for his County, and I confidently speak for Liverpool and its inhabitants, who are proud to boast of such a giant exponent of the game; and no greater loss was felt to the cricketing world than when Mr. A. G. Steel practically retired from county cricket. Another cricketer who is alone deserving to be classed with Mr. Steel is Mr. S. C. Voules, who, like the great C. I. Thornton, was a wonderfully hard

hitter, and in one innings of one hundred and two he hit one nine, one seven, and three sixes. Among other players who considerably help to make up a most creditable list of cricketers sent out from Marlborough, I find such names as E. L. Bateman, the brothers C. L. and H. Bell, W. H. Benthall, G. F. Helm, J. M. Fuller, E. Hume, J. J. Sewell, E. L. Fellowes, E. F.

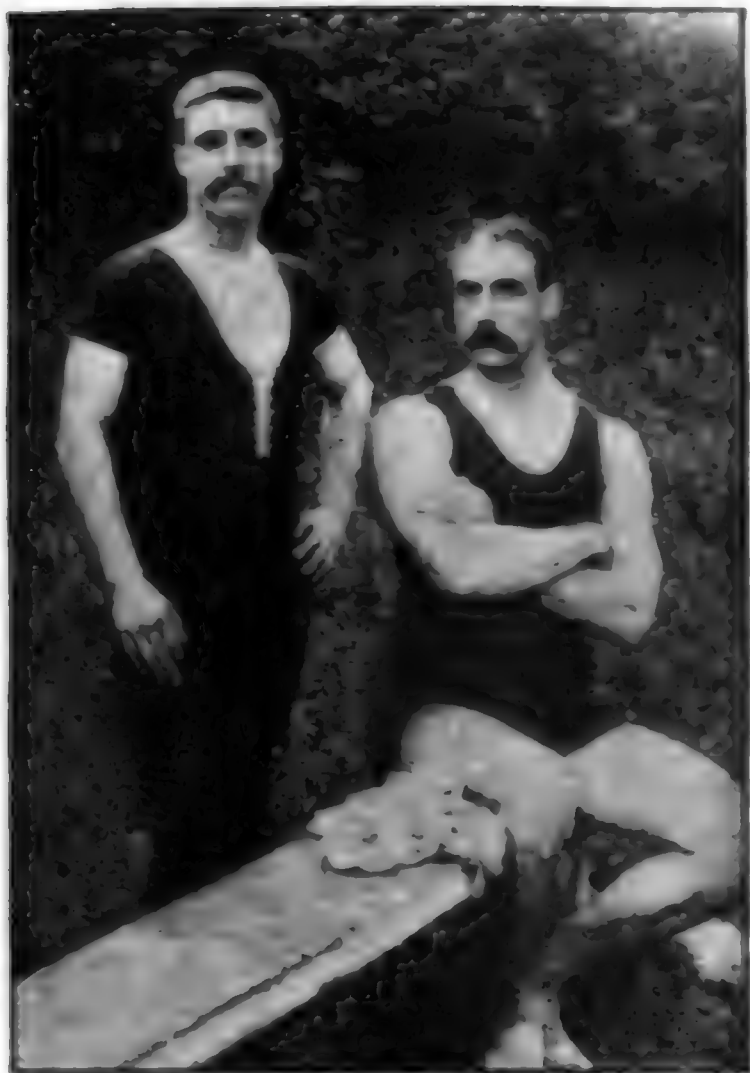
Taylor, T. W. Weeding, F. W. Miles, and the Leaches, who have all received especial notice in the cricketing world; while amongst the more modern players, a school could hardly ask for better representatives than W. W. Pulman, whose resolute batting and magnificent catch of a sodden and slippery ball in the celebrated "Six run" University Match, of 1875, will long be remembered; W. H. Milton, a fine bat and wicket-keeper; F. H. Lee, the noted lob-bowler; A. P. Wickham, the famous Somerset County stumper; C. P. Wilson, a brilliant all-round athlete, and one of the most successful of Cambridge "blues;" and W. C. Hedley, F. E. Rowe and J. B.



ARCHDEACON FARRAR, LATE HEAD MASTER.

Photo by]

[Elliott and Fry.



A. POWSEY, SWIMMING PROFESSOR. F. H. HEWITT, MASTER IN CHARGE.

Challen, who grace the ranks of the Somersetshire eleven. Gloucestershire also profited by enlisting the services of a promising Marlburian in S. A. P. Kitcat, who has been performing exceedingly well since his inclusion in the County eleven.

The playing-grounds are situated on the Bath Road, on the opposite side to the main entrance to the school court, where hundreds of Marlburians are to be found punishing the leather at every possible opportunity.

A splendid pavilion stands boldly at the far end of the grounds, from which any important game can be viewed by a great number of boys.

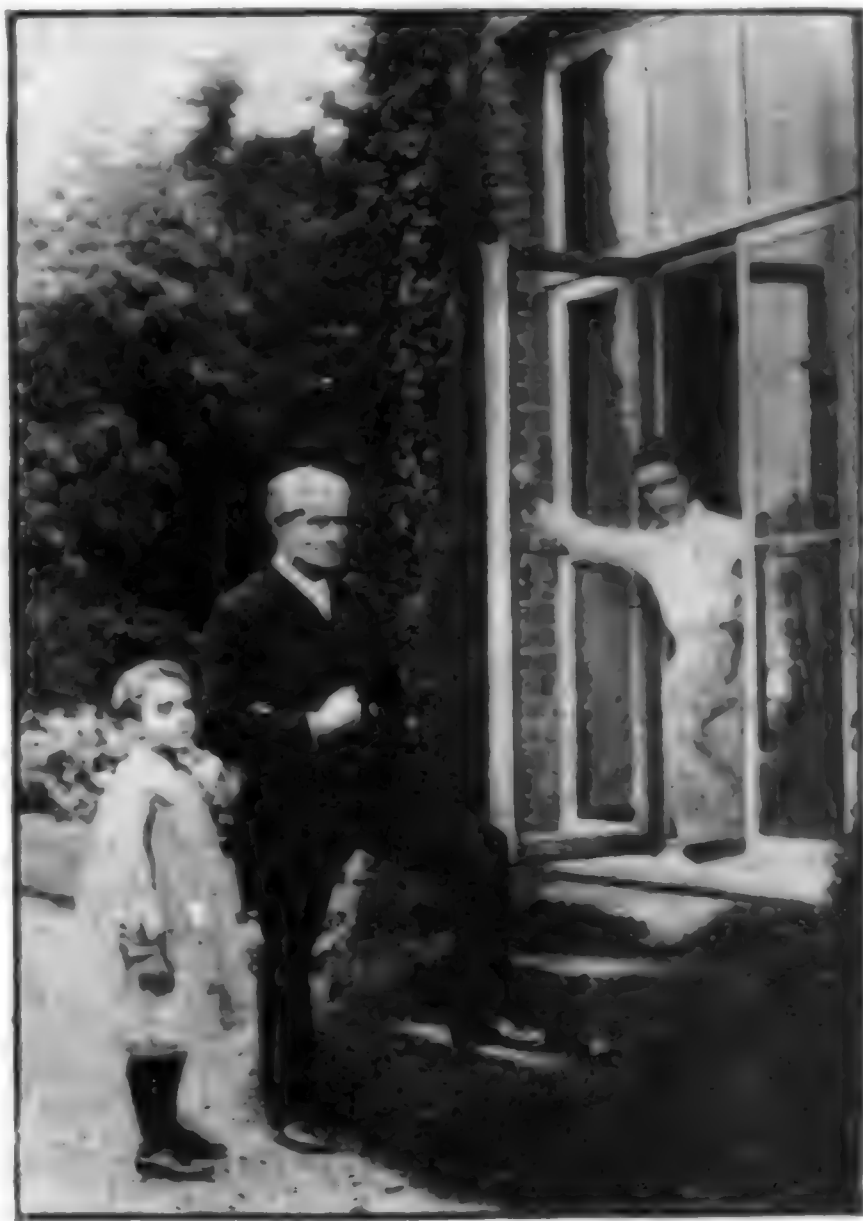
During the Lent term the boys indulge in hockey, rackets and fives, while others take a keen interest in paper-chases.

The Cadet Corps is an exceedingly strong one, and though they have made several bold bids for the Ashburton Shield, it only graced the walls of the Adderley Library during 1874, when the eight won the trophy at Wimbledon.

Prior to 1852, football was certainly played, but in a somewhat peculiar method, and it was not till Dr. Cotton arrived that the game was placed on a substantial basis, for he brought with him the traditions of the Rugby "Big Side;" and the whole system, with the help of Mr.

Scott and Mr. Bere, was changed, and the Rugby game instituted, with the exception of slight modifications of the rules (particularly in regard to "hacking over," which, as distinguished from hacking in the squash or scrimmage, has never been allowed in the Marlborough fields.) The principles of "off side," previously quite unknown were, inculcated, and the art of "drop kicking" and "punting" was taught, and a great stimulus was given to its practice by the competition Prize Cup, offered by Mr. Bull for proficiency in this accomplishment, the first winner being E. Waller, in 1854.

What a changed scene the football field of to-day presents to the eye of the early Marlburian. In the first days of the game, coats were made to do the service of the Rugby Goal Posts; neat flannels and jerseys have taken the place of mud-bespattered shirt sleeves, and torn trousers; regularly organized teams of players are enjoying themselves in friendly rivalry, in lieu of disorderly rabbles as of old; and above all, harmony and the referee's whistle now take the place of wrangling and disorder, which once seemed the order of the day. Probably the most brilliant period in the



REV. J. S. THOMAS, M.A., AT HOME.

history of Marlborough football lay in the decade from 1870 to 1880, both as regards the influence it exercised and the reputation its players acquired in the outside world.

The Marlborough Nomads Football Club, which soon took a position amongst the Clubs of the Metropolis, was founded in 1868, chiefly through the exertions of J. A. Bourdillon, who, whether as captain of the cricket eleven, captain of the rifle corps, or a prominent member of three football twentys, was one of the most energetic of Marlburians.

With Bourdillon were associated in the foundation of the Club, F. I. Currey, H. S. Illingworth, and R. F. Isaacson, each in turn taking the secretarial duties, which has devolved in more recent years upon one of the most popular of footballers in J. D. Vans Agnew.

The Nomads soon secured fixtures with all the leading Metropolitan Clubs, and was considered for some time one of the leading organisations playing the Rugby Rules.



RESIDENCE OF REV. J. S. THOMAS, M.A., BURSAR.

services of several other Marlburians, who have been closely connected with Rugby football, such as A. St. G. Hamersley, H. Freeman, E. Kewley, A. K. Butterworth, J. D. Vans Agnew, W. M. Tatham, and H. Vassall, the last named having for many years held the post of treasurer. F. H. Fox is still on the committee, and R. S. Whalley, after many years' service, holds a vice-presidency. At Oxford, Marlburians have made their mark in the past, and, though having been able to boast

of sending exponents of the game who attained the coveted "blue," it was not until 1876 that one of Marlborough's sons attained the distinction of leading the "Oxford XV." into the field. Prior to that year a Rugbeian had always filled this important function. This



PRESHUTE AND PRESHUTE CHURCH.

It was the Marlborough Nomads who took part in the foundation of the Rugby Football Union in 1871, and their secretary, F. I. Currey, formed one of the original Committee to draw up the rules. He has rendered most valuable assistance to the Union, and has taken an active part on the executive ever since, and can boast of having filled all offices from Secretary to President in connection with the Union.

The Rugby Union has claimed the

was followed up by H. Vassel, a "blue" of four years in succession, being appointed captain of the Oxonian Club in 1881 and in 1882, and M. Tatham in 1883, while R. O. B. Lane occupied the same position in 1889. Vassall's name is well written in the history of Oxford football, for the team attained such a standard of excellence as had never before, and has seldom, if ever, since, been acquired by any fifteen. He proved himself not only "a prince of captains," but a thoroughly scientific exponent



LITTLEFIELD.

of the game. He evolved the plan of systematic combination among the forwards, which now forms one of the chief features in the Rugby play.

At Cambridge C. P. Wilson is the most conspicuous of Marlburians, playing for that 'Varsity four years in succession, and captaining the team in 1880. He also gained his "blue" in the cricket field and on the cycling path, and can boast of being the only Marlburian that has gained the unique distinction of an "International" under both the Rugby and the Association codes.

W. I. Rowell also gained his "double blue" at Cambridge for football and cricket.

Of the wearers of the "English Rose," Marlborough has a long list, which commences with A. St. G. Hamersley, who formed one of the forwards in the first Interna-

tional Match that was played between England and Scotland at Edinburgh, in 1871.

Rugby certainly claims priority in the traditions of the great national game, but the younger sister has most certainly done a great deal to sustain the popularity of the greatest of amateur winter pastimes



THE COLUMN IN SAVERNAKE FOREST.

and place it on the firm basis it now holds.

At school the house and house matches evoke a great deal of interest, and the contest between the In and Out College Houses are quite one of the features of the season.

It is also pleasing to note that Clifton College is again on the Marlborough fixture list, and the old 1864 contest is only now treated as a joke between the two Schools.

The country surrounding Marlborough College is most charming, and both our artist and myself were continually reminded that we should not forget



COTTON HOUSE.

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THE KING'S OAK.

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though we were very unwelcome intruders, and astonished that we should dare to visit such a wild but beautiful spot at that time of night.

Marlburians can imagine our plight as we walked into the thick forest, expecting every moment we would surely come across the avenue; but to retreat now was almost as difficult as to go forward, until we happened, perchance, to meet one of the keepers, who informed us we were about two miles from the enchanted spot. He put us on the right path, and we walked on and on until the grey of evening overtook us, and when we reached the gates, all we could see was darkness, and, to our disgust, we retraced our steps to the town, too late to catch the London train. Thus having to spend another night at Marlborough, we decided to make another journey to the Marquis of Ailesbury's seat the following morning, and well were we repaid, for true

enough we found it a delightful place, as may be gathered from our frontispiece last month.

The Grand Avenue is four miles long, running through the middle of the forest, commencing at the London Road and terminating at the beautiful mansion, the front of which looks over another grove, not so thickly wooded, to the column, one mile distant from the gates, erected to the memory of previous Lords of the Manor.

Having visited the "King's Oak" and the famous "eight roads," reluctantly were we compelled to leave this charming spot, where the squirrels were running about in all directions, but we have promised ourselves another treat in the near future, and I can only advise my readers who desire a beautiful holiday to visit this lovely country lying almost at their doors on the Great Western Railway.

WM. CHAS. SARGENT.

The following Schools have already appeared in THE LUDGATE MONTHLY:—ETON, HARROW, RUGBY, WINCHESTER, WESTMINSTER, CHRIST'S HOSPITAL, DULWICH, ST. PAUL'S, CHARTERHOUSE, WELLINGTON AND MERCHANT TAYLORS', and back numbers can be obtained through all Booksellers, or direct from the Office, 53, Fleet Street, London.

COLLEGE CHAT.



E. GARNETT (Charterhouse).
1st Prize.

This will be recommenced after the Summer holidays, when we shall be pleased to receive Notes of interest from all the Public Schools — (ED)

CRICKET PRIZES.

(For full particulars see last month.)

We have pleasure in giving Portraits of Winners of 1st and 2nd Prizes for Ju'y.



B. W. V. KING (Rossall).
2nd Prize.

THE THREE WINNERS FOR AUGUST.

1. W. MORTIMER, Marlborough, on August 3rd and 4th, scored 98, v. Rugby.
2. J. GRAHAM, Marlborough, on August 3rd and 4th, scored 63, v. Rugby.
3. R. W. NICHOLLS, Rugby, on August 3rd and 4th, scored 63, v. Marlborough.

Tales from Dreamland

The Lost Caliph

BEN ILDRIM slowly paced to and fro in the burning Persian sunshine, crushing the scorching yellow sand under his feet, his head sunk on his folded arms—lost in thought.

Presently, not heeding his whereabouts, he left the solitude of the plain behind him, and soon, instead of the shifting sand, he trod the whitened pavements of Persepolis; the passers by, busy though they were with their own affairs, stopped—laden with their baskets of fruit or fish, to gaze for a moment at their dreamy Caliph; but, at the "Allah be with you" of a passing neighbour, moved on again.

As the figure of Ben Ildrim slowly crossed the darkened doorway of a shadowy mosque, there stole from out its solitude a quiet figure; it was Urumiyah, daughter of the old wizened seller of relics, whose beauty—dark and glorious as a true daughter of the sun—was closely veiled, more for private reasons of her own than from a wish to hide herself from inquisitive eyes. Stepping softly after the

thoughtful Caliph, yet ever behind, she stole nearer and nearer, clutching with one brown, tapering hand the loosened folds of her robe. Up one burning pavement, down another, through grass-grown streets, past bubbling fountains and chattering girls, till her feet ached.

Would he never stop? Would he never let fall from his lips the mighty question she knew he was pondering? Already he had long ago passed his palace door and received, unconsciously, the low salaam of his blacks.

"I *will* know of whom he is thinking," she muttered — "Zuleika or me. If *she* —" and a low curse rose to her lips, while under her veil her eyes shone dark and fierce.

She felt someone pull at her robe; hastily turning round, she faced the ugly, crouching figure of an ancient hag.

"Ah, my pretty one," the crone laughed, pointing with taunting finger at Ben Ildrim ahead; "follow on, follow on; you'll never reach him—never."

Urumiyah paused, with trembling heart,

and well she might, for in those wizened, taunting features, she recognized the mighty Vahm, the witch mother, the bride of the Evil One, the inhabitant of the dreaded, awe-surrounded lonely tent, whose ragged coverings fluttered in the breeze, one mile from the city wall.

"Mother," she said, with bated breath, as she bowed her head, "stop me not, but help me, you who are all-powerful; lend me a little of your might. I love Ben Ildrim, but I know not which he loves, my sister Zuleika or myself. I must know. I will, and it *shall* be myself. Stop me not! even now the precious words may be dropping from his lips," and she cast a hurried, fearful glance after the now disappearing figure of the Caliph.

"Mother, make him love me, I implore you."

The old woman was silent, then a smile of intense cunning lit up her face, and drawing the girl to her side:

"Listen," she said; "would you learn the secret of the heart of Ben Ildrim? then visit at the moon's rising, the home of Vahm, thy foster mother; for surely, my chicken, thy little heart is as like my own as two grains of sand. Come alone, and"—the woman gives a delighted chuckle—"before the sun rises again, thou shalt know thy way to the heart of the Caliph."

Urumiyah commences to pour out a storm of thanks, but before two words have left her lips, Vahm has vanished and she is alone.

Ben Ildrim has disappeared minutes ago, but that matters little or nothing to her now—she, with the aid of the witch mother, will be all-powerful; and, with beating heart, as silently as she has come, Urumiyah steals back again to the shelter of her father's home.

A few hours later, when the city, wrapped in midnight gloom, lies peaceful and silent under the slowly rising Eastern moon, a white figure steals softly out of the city and draws, with trembling feet, nearer and nearer, what in the distance looks like a heap of flapping rags; but what is, in reality, the home of the mighty Vahm. Inside the tent the gloom of the early night is dispelled, for the place is filled with a misty haze, that issues from an old blackened cauldron, fixed in one corner of the tent. Whatever bubbles within it sends forth, besides the steam,

a loathsome odour, that creeps round and round the tattered canvas, but never seems to escape. A bright, rosy gleam comes from the pile of embers beneath the cauldron, and, lighting up the crouching figure of Vahm, gives an even worse expression to her already evil face.

"Ah," she chuckles, "I have you now; you forget, my pretty one, the sneers and blows given old Vahm in your anger; ah, you little knew her power then, and trusted to the aid of the immortal beings who seem to have deserted you of late. Oh, Caliph," she goes on, with an evil laugh; "little you know of the creature who thinks to head your harem, but who



"LOOK!" SOFTLY BREATHES THE HAG.

instead, by the aid of the witch woman's sting, will reap her reward."

The flapping canvas is raised, and in creeps the trembling Urumiyah. The woman lifts her scraggy hands and motions her to a distant corner, where, tremblingly obeying her, she sits, shivering in the shadowy distance.

She gazes with terrified eyes at the figure of Vahm, who now stands upright and awful in front of her.

Slowly the tent darkens, and all is deep gloom, save for the two shafts of light that spring from the eyes of the witch, and which glare with a terrible intensity into the face of Urumiyah.

The tent lightens again, but Vahm has vanished, and in her place, surrounded by a purple haze, there rests on a silken couch the sleeping figure of the Caliph.

The love-stricken eyes of the girl drink in every movement of the visionary being, and she starts violently as she feels a cold touch on her wrist; it is Vahm, kneeling beside her, silent but terrible.

Together they gaze; then——

"Look," softly breathes the hag.

Urumiyah utters a low, stifled cry—for the sleeping form has awakened, and turned with opened eyes and a glad smile to meet the approaching figure of—not herself—but Zuleika! Tighter and tighter her hands clench together, as Ben Ildrim



SHE REACHED THE SHORES
OF THE LAKE.

receives her sister's caresses with all the ardour of intense affection; and her eyes gleam passionate and cruel as Vahm whispers: "Do they not love?"

But as she watches—the lovely face of Zuleika grows old and drawn, and, behold, Ben Ildrim turns from his love with loathing and hate!

Then another figure joins the pair; and again Urumiyah gives a low cry—this time of delight, for the new comer is herself; only ten times more beautiful and dazzling than she has ever appeared. The visionary prince turns with glad eyes to the lovely maiden, and, forsaking the prostrate Zuleika, clasps her to his breast.

All is dark; the vision is gone; and

Urumiyah, standing triumphant, clutches the witch-mother by the hand.

"If this shall prove true, if it shall be so," she almost screams, "I will do anything, anything in my power to serve you."

Urumiyah does not see the ugly gleam in the witch's eyes.

"All this will I do," she answers. "I will turn the love of the Caliph to hatred and scorn; I will make you dazzling and beautiful as the sun, for one little promise—when you have not the love you crave for any longer, or when Ben Ildrim is dead—you will come and give yourself to me."

Gladly Urumiyah promises. When she has no longer the Caliph's love, life will have no more charms, she thinks, and "When he dies, I, too, will join him."

"Then," says the witch woman, "to gain your coming beauty, you must leave

here and journey in search of the water of the enchanted lake. I have used all the liquid I once drew from its depths; when you have found it, drink from it seven times. Then, with all haste, return."

"I will go at once," she cries in feverish haste. "Tell me the way."

Taking her by the hand, Vahm led her to the tent door.

"Behold!" she cried; and there, in the far distance, Urumiyah saw gleaming,

as if snow covered the tops of distant peaks, and resting in their bosom, there lay what looked to her like a tiny mirror glistening in the moonlight.

"The lake!" she cried, and, darting from the side of Vahm, vanished into the night.

The witch mother, bride of the Evil One, watched her departure with a villainous leer; then, tossing up her arms and giving vent to a shrill scream of delight, she darted into the tent.

With rapid footstep, on the girl journeyed, making straight for the glistening lake that had never been there before, but although the object of her search drew no nearer, the way was neither toilsome nor dangerous.

The path she trod was not straight or gloomy, but winding and beautiful, and, so lovely were the flowers and so powerful their scent, that often she would feel a faint drowsiness come over her and she would sink, with dimmed senses, under the shadow of a flowering vine, only to awaken with a start, knowing not how long she had slept, to hasten on once more.

At length, one evening, just as the sun was setting, she reached the shores of the lake, and lying full length on its grassy bank, drank deeply seven times.

Then, gazing earnestly in the water, she beheld herself exquisitely lovely; and, joyfully leaping to her feet, exclaimed:

"How beautiful I am, the city of Persepolis and its Caliph must no longer be left in ignorance of it, and I must return."

But even as she spoke the same subtle perfume rose from the lake that had surrounded the flowers, and she sank into unconsciousness. How long she slept she knew not, but, awakening with a start, turned with hurrying feet down the homeward path, not without gazing once more on her new beauty. The journey back appeared nothing; she paused not once on the way, and it seemed to her that in less than the rising and setting of one sun she again stood within the city.

The streets she thought were strangely crowded, and the people stared oddly at her. "It is some fair," she said, or the Caliph is giving a feast. The faces are strange," and she hastened to her father's house.

It was gone! The crowded relic shop was no longer there. "I must have mistaken the street," she murmured, and she asked a passing woman for her father, Ben Almund.

"I know him not," and, shaking her head, the woman went on. Then Urumi-



"TRAITRESS."

yah hastened to the palace of the Caliph. All was the same. In trembling tones, she said to a waiting black:

"I must see Ben Ildrim, the Caliph."

Now was to be her reward! now her triumph!

She was met with wondering glances.

"Ben Ildrim? Why, what are you dreaming of? Our Caliph is Crimetes," and they bowed themselves to the ground. "There was a Ben Ildrim, grandfather to our present lord, the favourite wife of whose harem was Zuleika, daughter to the old relic seller, and grandmother to our Caliph Crimetes, but they died and joined Allah years ago. You

cannot mean them."

At these words Urumiyah thrust back the heavy masses of her hair and gazed with wild eyes on the speaker. She must be dreaming, or—mad! Ben Ildrim and Zuleika dead! Then, with a low, passionate cry, she realised that she had been betrayed; the journey she had performed had not been one of months, but, alas! of years.

The blacks gazed upon her in amazement; her strange words and, above all, her truly marvellous beauty held them enchanted. Here was a woman asking for the Caliph, whether a dead one or their present lord it mattered little—she must see him, for the eyes of Crimetes, their master, were even more open to the power of beauty than those of his grandfather Ben Ildrim, and truly the loveliness of this strange woman was far beyond ordinary.

Thus arguing, they hurried to the chamber of their lord, while Urumiyah, completely stunned at the suddenness of the shock, sank prostrate on the palace steps.

At the news of his slaves, the Caliph left his cushioned couch, and came, with languid steps, to the entrance hall. He was weary of hearing of these new beauties,

who turned out each one plainer than the last; it really was hardly worth while leaving his scented chamber to view them.

He reached the steps, and, bending over the fallen figure, stretched out his hand, and raising her, met her eyes. Their unlooked-for beauty struck him speechless; but Urumiyah, beholding in the new Caliph an exact likeness to her former love, throwing up her rounded arms, fell again at the feet of Crimetes, crying, "At last I have found you!"

Crimetes, astounded at her words, turned to his slaves, and they, pouring into his listening ears the story of her coming, waited impatiently, hoping for the praises of their master for the new beauty. The Caliph, once more raising the kneeling figure, told her, as his blacks had done, of the death of Ben Ildrim and her former friends.

"But," he added, "your beauty fills me with a sudden joy. I will love you far more than the dead Caliph," and he stepped backwards with open arms."

Urumiyah paused—her love was dead, but here was another ready to adore her—and what matter which it was, so

long as they called him "Caliph." So, musing thus, she stepped forward to place her little hands in the outstretched ones of Crimetes, when her own name fell upon her ear in a too horribly familiar tone:—

"Urumiyah!"

She turned suddenly and looked with desperate eyes right into the face of Vahm.

"Traitor," she screamed.

The woman answered her not. "Come," was all she said, her face turned towards the angry girl.

Slowly she stepped backwards, and as slowly but surely, with fixed enchanted gaze, did Urumiyah follow. Backward, step by step, down the white pavement, past the startled groups of onlookers and the astonished Caliph, out of the city gates, across the yellow desert sand, till the forms of both stood outlined against the tattered tent, right into the hovel itself.

Then, before the eyes of the astonished gazers, who with fascinated footsteps, had followed the strange pair, the yellow sand rolled back, a grey haze filled the air, and, with one cry of agony from the beautiful Urumiyah, tent, witch and foiled victim sank from their sight for evermore.



Whispers from the Woman's World.

By FLORENCE MARY GARDINER.

THE POPULAR WOMAN.

WHAT peculiar quality is it that constitutes the popular woman?

Certainly not beauty, for one often sees those whose features are faultless and complexions above reproach, playing the unwelcome rôle of wallflowers. Neither is it youth, for sweet seventeen, in all her innocence, is apt to pall upon the many-seasoned man of the world. Neither, I am convinced, is it consummate virtue, for the old Adam in him is sure to rebel against the mere suggestion expressed or implied, that he is not so perfect as he might be.

After carefully considering the subject in all its bearings, I am inclined to believe that a woman's popularity with the opposite sex depends, in a large measure, on her capability for bearing with unruffled demeanour, absolute and unmitigated boredom. The A B C of the popular woman's creed tells her that she must assume an interest it is impossible for her to feel when man, noble man, retails his woes, ever bearing in mind that subjects, which are of paramount importance to her, must be locked for ever in the inmost recesses of her own heart, for would it be reasonable to expect the lords of creation to waste their precious time on the sorrows and difficulties of others.

She will be careful to avoid punishing his vanity by allowing him to feel upon any matter in this world or the next that she is better informed than himself. For has not time, custom and Holy Writ settled, irrevocably, that "the man is the *head* of the woman, and that they are in all things subservient to him?" At any cost such a social catastrophe as for a woman to assert that she is right and he is wrong must be prevented. Neither should she forget that time-honoured proverb which so delicately refers to the most direct way to his heart, not to mention his creature

comforts. Time was made for slaves, consequently for women; so whatever her calling or avocation may be, they can afford no excuse if she is not instantly available should her lord and master require her services or deign to notice her. Could there be a higher ambition for a thoroughly womanly woman than to be ever ready, ever willing to obey her husband's slightest beck and call? and, if she is properly constituted, of course, she will never complain that such a sphere has a tendency to stifle her energies.

If she has wealth at her command (and wishes to be popular with her husband) the Women's Property Act will have no effect upon her, and all cheques, as they fall due, will seek their properly-appointed place, with *his* balance at the bankers. If, on the other hand, she be poor, she can comfort herself with the idea that she will be a mendicant wife as long as she lives, and that she is sweetly dependent upon his goodwill and bounty for the roof which covers her, the food she eats and the clothes she wears, and, perhaps, if she is very obedient and finds favour in his eyes, he may, from his unbounded generosity, spare a sovereign occasionally to allow her to have the supreme felicity of making him a present.

Recreation and amusement are quite beside the question. A good woman's place is at home, minding her children, mending the stockings and preparing those savoury dishes which his soul desires. If these are all accomplished satisfactorily, she will probably receive her just reward in the evening hours, when, under the influence of domesticity, he will, for the benefit of his faithful spouse, detail the true and particular histories of young and beautiful women who have fallen victims to his bow. (N.B. — *When the time arrives let her not imperil her hard won popularity by showing a want of appreciation of his manly confidences.*) Sweet as this quality is to the majority of

women, they often risk their all by refusing to bend the knee and bow the head to the yoke; and in rare cases have even declined to listen to the flowers of oratory conjured up for their behoof. But happily such traitors in the camp are few and far between.

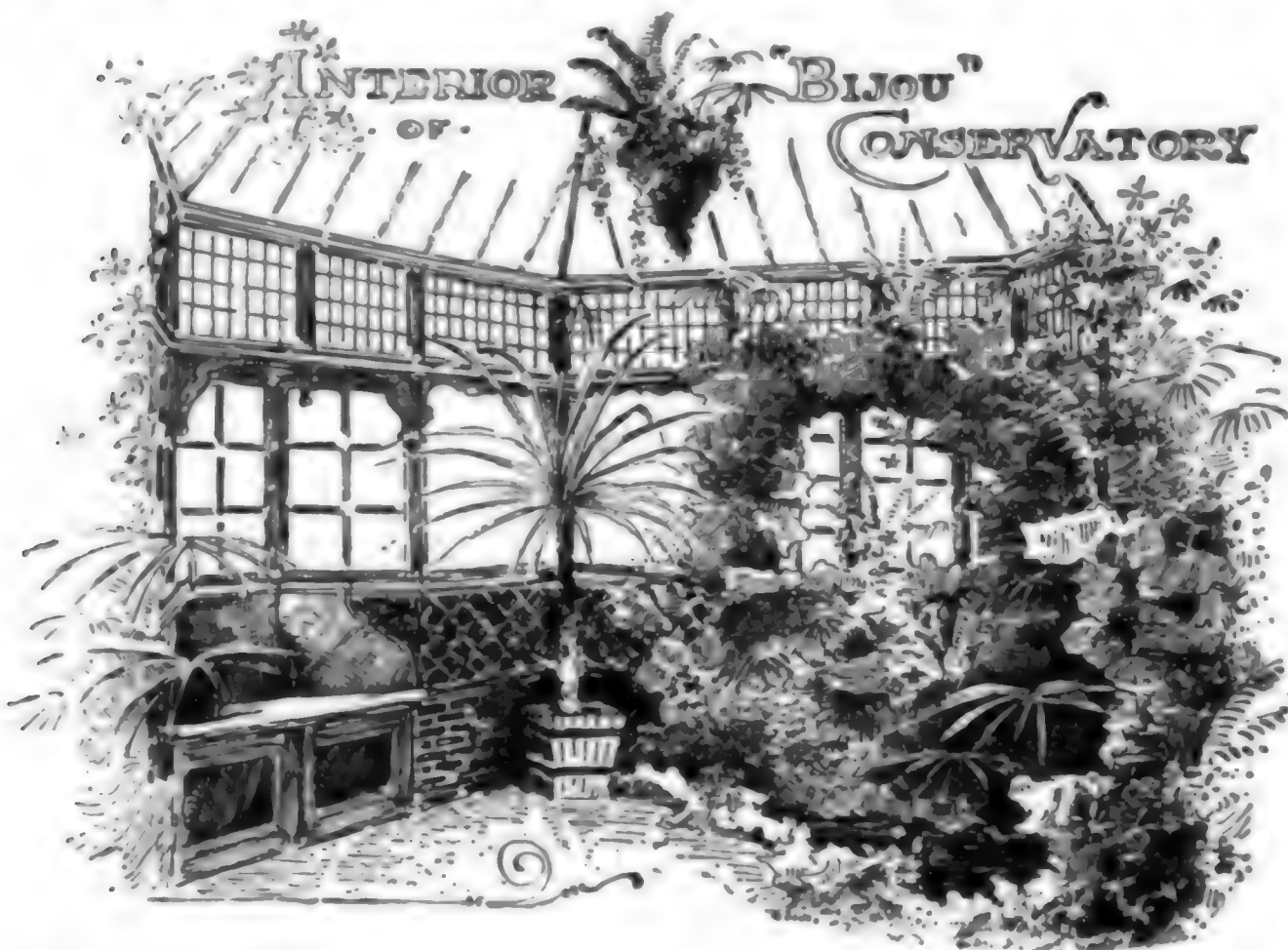
"Any popularity which I may command," said a charming lady of my acquaintance, "arises from the fact that I am not handsome enough to make other women jealous, and have been fully conscious of this drawback in my personal appearance from my earliest youth, consequently have never depended on those little wiles and arts which form the stock in trade of those whom nature has specially endowed. I recognised my want

is unbounded—in their ranks we find such people as the Princess of Wales, the Baroness Burdett Coutts, Florence Nightingale, and many others, who have made the world richer by their presence. Women of entirely opposite natures, but withal possessing that subtle attraction known as popularity.

As I write, a fierce rain beats against the window-pane and seems to say, like the persistent brook, "I go on for ever." A chill east wind rushes down the muddy street, and in its course whirls away a few of the leaves, which lie ankle-deep in the garden, while damp pedestrians and heavily loaded omnibuses hurry past, for the days are short now, and the gathering gloom warns all who are abroad that the

night is at hand.

The prospect from without is certainly not enlivening, and I gladly turn from it to gaze on a cheerful drawing-room, with a brightly-blazing fire. Close by its ruddy gleam is a couch, with a cosy tea-table at a convenient angle, the fragrant odour from which recalls pleasant hours recently spent in "the Land o' Cakes," for I have just returned from a too brief holiday in Scotland, which, with its true-hearted



of mental brilliance, so cultivated the art of listening attentively and intelligently, till now it has become second nature; and though it is a matter of regret to me that I shall never be a bright and sparkling conversationalist, as the years roll on I reconcile myself to the minor rôle, and am recompensed by the love of little children, the confidences of the young of both sexes, and the trust, respect and esteem of the aged; all good things in their way, though hardly calculated to satisfy a very ardent nature."

Do we not all know many good and true women, whose popularity is everlasting because it is founded on this sure and sound basis?

Women whose magnetic attraction is their greatest charm and whose influence

and kindly inhabitants, must always possess many attractions for me. In days of yore, Caledonia, stern and wild, belied its character as far as I was concerned, and proved instead a happy harbour of refuge. Canny Scots of both sexes bade me a hearty welcome, and a close acquaintance with their many good qualities bound me to them with the strongest cords of friendship, love and sympathy. Scotland's growing popularity with tourists cannot be wondered at. By the London and North Western Railway one traverses some of the most picturesque districts in Britain, while their luxurious corridor trains cover the distance between Euston and Edinburgh in eight and a half hours. These trains are replete with every comfort the traveller can desire, and one can

enjoy the utmost privacy in the charming coupés, or wander at will through the various carriages, by the long passage which runs down one side. Dressing-rooms and dining-saloons are provided for the convenience of passengers; and for the benefit of those who travel by this route, I give the menus for first and third class passengers.

WEST COAST DINING SALOON.

FIRST CLASS DINNER, 3s. 6d.

Mock Turtle Soup.
Boiled Salmon. Hollandaise Sauce.
Blanquette of Veal, Champignons.
Roast Beef.
Beans. Potatoes. Salad.

Greengage Tart. Coffee. Ice Cream.
Cheese, Butter, Biscuits, etc.

A LA CARTE.

Soup, 9d.
Lobster Mayonnaise, 2s.
Cold Pressed Beef, 1s. 6d.
Cold Chicken and Ham, 2s.
Grilled Chicken and Ham, 2s.
Compote of Fruit and Rice, 6d.
Grapes, 1s. Greengages, 6d. Pears, 6d.
Cup of Tea or Coffee, with Luncheon or
Dinner, 4d.
Pot of Tea or Coffee, with Bread and Butter, 6d.

THIRD CLASS DINNER, 2s. 6d.

Mock Turtle Soup.
Roast Beef.
Beans. Potatoes. Salad.
Greengage Tart. Coffee. Ice Cream.
Cheese, Butter, Biscuits.

A LA CARTE.

Soup, 6d.
Lobster Mayonnaise,
1s. 9d.
Cold Pressed Beef, 1s. 3d.
Cold Chicken and Ham,
1s. 9d.
Grilled Chicken and
Ham, 1s. 9d.
Compote of Fruit and
Rice, 6d.
Cup of Tea or Coffee
with Luncheon, 3d.
Pot of Tea or Coffee
with Bread and But-
ter, 6d.
Grapes, 1s.
Greengages, 6d.
Pears, 6d.

There is no need now for us to picnic with sandwich tin or crumby cake upon our knee and glass propped insecurely against the cushions of the compartment. We simply adjourn to the next carriage and find a daintily-prepared meal awaiting us.

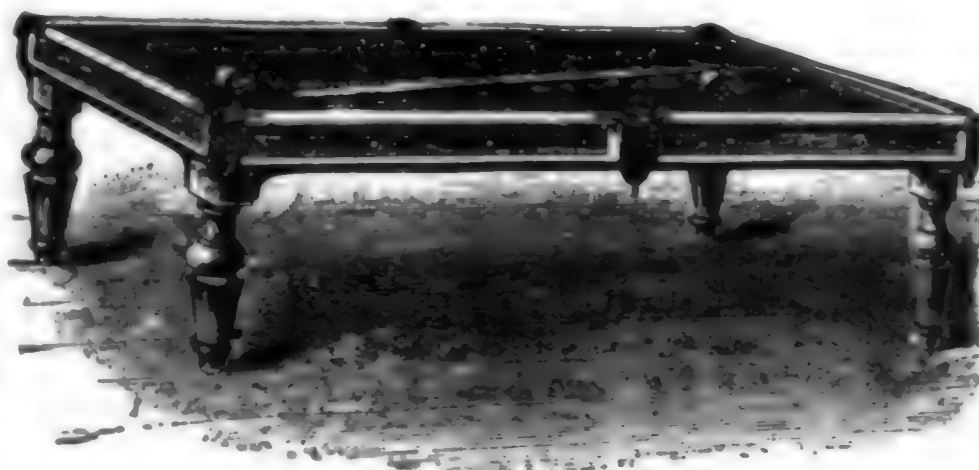
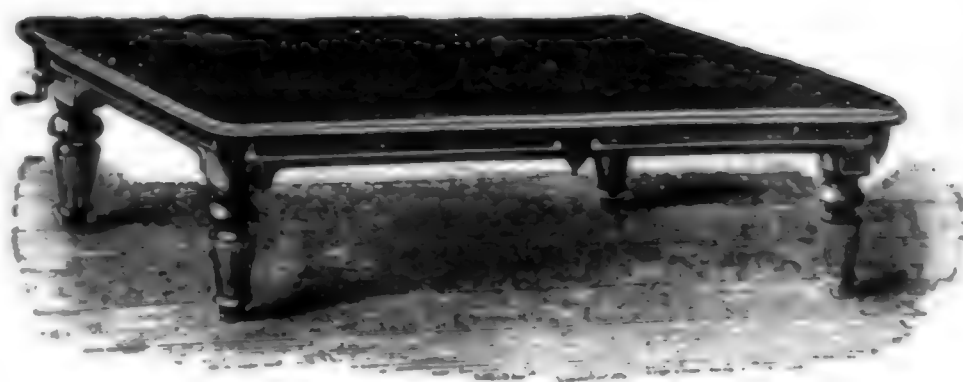
Going or returning from Scotland, passengers are permitted to break the journey at various towns on the London and North Western Railway system. Oxenholme is the junction for Kendal and Windermere, from which the other lakes are easy of



A WINTER GARDEN.

access. Preston has many points of interest, and the Park Hotel, which adjoins the railway station, is one of the best-managed houses I have ever stayed at; while its position, overlooking the beautifully-laid out grounds with wooded slopes, known as Preston Park, is unique. Carlisle, with its cathedral, also deserves a visit.

But I am afraid I have wandered rather far away from my little drawing-room, with its conservatory—the latest addition to my treasures, and which I particularly wish to bring before the notice of the readers of *THE LUDGATE MONTHLY*. During my absence from home, I was charmed with the lovely winter garden (of which a sketch has also been given), and suffered from qualms of envy that my inelastic income prevented my indulging in a similar extravagance. On enquiring from my hostess who had been responsible for this pretty feature of her house, she gave me the address of Mr. Dick Radcliffe, High Holborn, upon whom I promptly called on my return, and ordered a smaller but, to me, an equally fascinating conservatory. Even at this season of the year it is a thing of beauty, with its masses of fern, hardy floral creepers, and wide comfortable seats. Such a nook is a

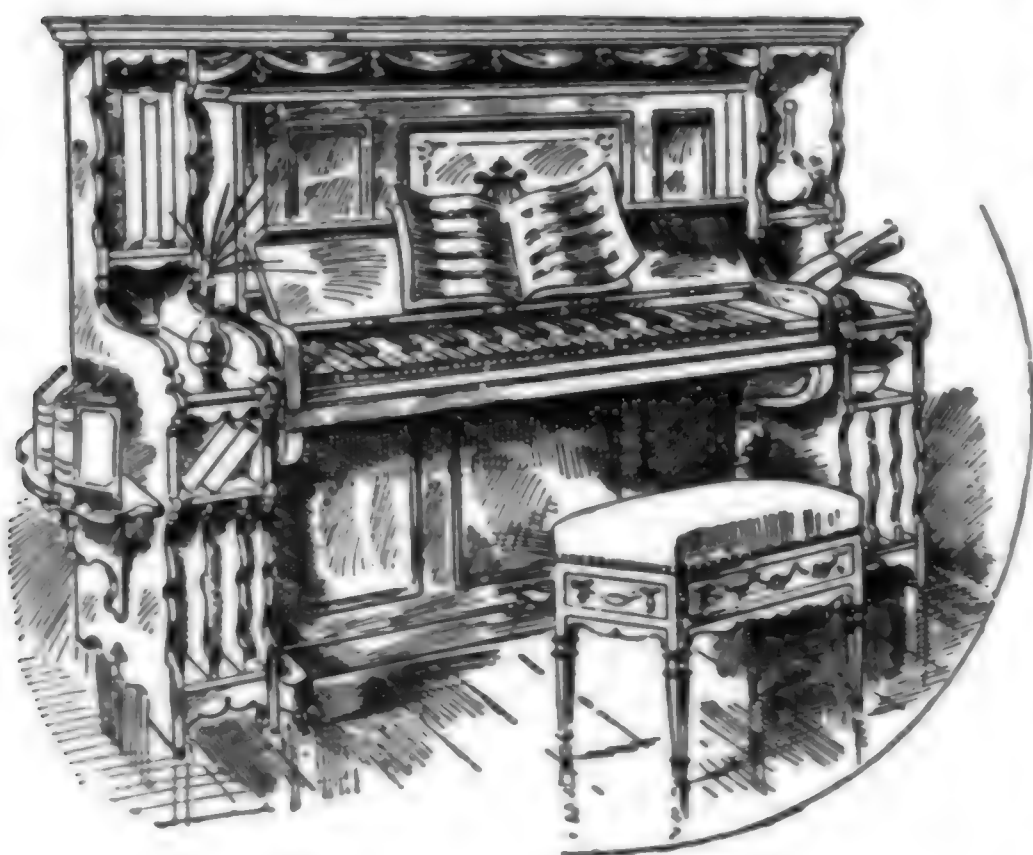


COMBINED BILLIARD AND DINING TABLE.

great attraction to any house and a constant source of amusement and pleasure to the owner thereof. It surprises me that builders do not more often recognise this fact, for such an addition at the time of building a house would not entail a large expenditure, and would insure an increased rental in the majority of cases.

Another novelty in household furniture is a piano fitment, which I was shown, a few days since, at Messrs. Oetzmann's, Hampstead Road, London. This convenient arrangement consists of various compartments for bound volumes or loose music, and is further embellished with quaint little brackets and shelves for ornaments, flowers, etc.

This firm makes also a combined dining and billiard table, which I can specially recommend to *pater familias*, for such a purchase would offer an inducement to the sons of the family to remain at home during the long winter nights, and would afford more innocent amusement than the billiard saloons, which are so largely patronised by the majority of young men, who, owing to the dulness of their own homes, naturally seek for amusement and congenial society elsewhere. This table, by a simple arrangement,



A PIANO FITMENT.

is raised or lowered to the proper height for dining or billiards, and is fitted with best Bangor slates and improved cushions. When used for a dining-table it has a solid mahogany top, and forms a handsome piece of furniture.

FASHIONS AND FRIPPERIES.

London shops are filled with the most tempting wares, intended for the personal adornment of the fair sex, and it is difficult, indeed, to select from the *embarras de richesse*, which greets us on every side. Dark and rich tones of colour are most popular, especially moss greens, browns, and various tints of crimson, which we now have in such a long range of shades, that both blonde and brunette can be suited to perfection.

This will certainly be a good season for furs, and large stocks of wolverine, mink, sable, skunk, blue fox, sealskin and Persian lamb have been purchased by the leading houses. Ermine, too, will enjoy a *renaissance*, but should only be worn by

those who can afford several sets of fur, as it is so delicate in appearance, and so quickly soils, that it is only appropriate in a crisp, frosty air, or for evening wear, when it makes a beautiful and regal trimming for opera-mantles and similar garments.

The accompanying sketch gives a good idea of a novel evening cloak composed of



OPERA MANTLE.



A BALL DRESS.



AN INDOOR GOWN.



SIMPLE DINNER GOWN.



A VISITING COSTUME.

black and white brocade, turned back with revers of velvet; the short sleeves have an embroidered border, while the neck is finished with a collar of ermine.

I recently saw a very pretty evening dress of buttercup satin, covered with white Valenciennes lace. Across the empire sash, and falling down the left side of the skirt, was a long trail of yellow roses with brown shaded leaves, and the bodice had a deep lace berthe which almost reached to the waist. Such a frock would not offer insuperable difficulties to the amateur modiste, and would be equally effective with either a pink, turquoise or white satin foundation.

This elegant gown is of white mousseline de soie, over rose-coloured silk, and the trimmings consist of insertions and a narrow frill of white Maltese lace.

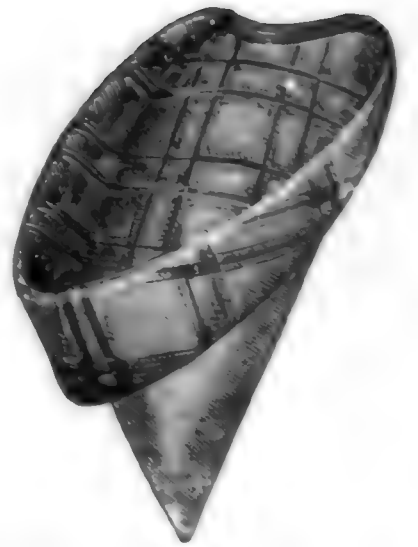
A very effective walking dress for ceremonious occasions, may be made of Lincoln green velveteen, with a garniture of black jet. The crowning feature of the costume is the stylish hat of green velvet, with large bows of the same. The brim is edged with jet and a handsome aigrette is placed in the front, a style largely adopted by short women, as it appears to give height to the figure.

A stylish house dress of crimson cloth is trimmed with black silk guipure and bands of fancy black braiding. The skirt is slightly gored and is finished at the edge with a braided border. Narrower bands of the same are used on the revers of the Figaro jacket, which is worn over a full vest of black lace, and the gigot sleeves have a narrow cuff and lace ruffles.

For a useful travelling cloak I can cordially recommend Mr. R. Field, Ladies'



THE BRAEMAR CAPE, WITH DETACHABLE HOOD.



Tailor, 51 and 52, Princes Street, Edinburgh. This firm is justly celebrated for capes and mantles made of double texture clan tartan and Harris tweeds. The Highland and Braemar capes (the latter with a detachable hood), are most serviceable garments, especially when lined with the Inverness tartan which was recently adopted by the Duke of York, who is also Earl of Inverness. This plaid is most effective and harmonizes well with the neutral tints of most Scotch tweeds.

MILLINERY.

Velvet is used in every department of millinery, and steel and jet play no unimportant part in the new trimmings. Plenty of feathers will also be worn—ostrich plumes and feather trimmings, fancy feather mounts, and black and coloured wings and quill feathers.

Felt hats will always be popular with those who desire head-gear of a lasting character, for nothing withstands the fog and rain of our moist atmosphere better or retains its shape so well to the last. These are now made in every shade, and such tints as fawn, biscuit and beaver, are selling freely, and look well when trimmed with black or brown velvet and plumes to correspond. There is an inclination towards large hats of picturesque design, and bonnets of small close-fitting shapes, with crowns of moderate size and strings at discretion.



INCIDENTS OF THE MONTH

SOCIAL, DRAMATIC, MUSICAL & GOSSIP.

What with the hot and sultry weather we have experienced, society folk being anywhere but in London, and our principal dramatic folk touring, the theatrical incidents of the month are very few. There is a perfect stagnation in the world of drama, only four theatres being open. Farcical comedy is well represented in "Charlie's Aunt," at the Globe; the lamp of burlesque burns brightly at the Shaftesbury with "Morocco Bound;" the hearts of all good country-folk are moved to the core with good, old fashioned melodrama at the Adelphi, as depicted in Mr. Henry Pettitt's "Woman's Revenge," and comic opera holds sway at the Criterion, where that old favourite, "La Fille de Madame Angot," continues to amuse. Thus we have a sample of each kind of play, and each theatre is, in consequence, doing, in spite of the drawbacks aforesaid, good business. By the time these lines appear in print things will have wakened up somewhat, but to meet the demands of an imperious printer and an equally autocratic editor, I have to get my copy well in hand.

It is noteworthy that our burlesque theatres are drawing more and more on the music-hall folk for their talent. Many artistes of both sexes are deserting the boards of the legitimate drama for the halls; no doubt the princely salaries and constant engage-

ments have a lot to do with this, and Art (with a big A, please, Mr. Printer) has to take a back seat. The Olympic Theatre has succumbed to the inevitable and turned itself into a music hall, or, to call it by its new name, a "Theatre of Varieties." Rumour has it that yet another theatre is likely to follow in its wake.

Looking at the halls, we see what a marked improvement has taken place there; now, one sees and hears the highest talent. Take Miss Lucy Clarke, for instance; here is a lady, a gold medallist from the Royal Academy of Music, with a superb voice, delighting and entrancing her audiences with her rendering of some of our finest ballads. She purposes going, however, a step farther, and will shortly

give us some of the best operatic and classical selections, with piano and violoncello obbligato. If some enterprising manager had suggested such a thing a few years ago as the rendering of Gounod's "Ave Maria," or the "Jewel Song" from "Faust," or one of the many magnificent airs from the "Messiah" or "Elijah," we should have laughed him to scorn. The Albert Hall was the place for such a class of talent, he would have been told; yet, so much has the taste and tone of the Music Hall been educated and cultivated that this kind of entertainment is now highly appreciated.



MISS LUCY CLARKE.

Photo. by]

[Stebbing, Paris.



R. FRANK CELLI.

Photo. by]

[London & County Co.

Again, there is Mr. Frank Celli, well known in operatic circles. He made his first public appearance of note in Italian opera some twenty years ago under Colonel Mapleson. Mr. Celli was Valentine and Madame Titiens was Marguerite in the same cast. After five years with Mapleson, during which period he played such parts as Don Giovanni, the Duke in "Lucrezia," Mephisto in "Faust," and Papageno in the "Flauto Magico," he joined Carl Rosa, who was then forming his company for high-class English opera, and he was associated with Carl Rosa in establishing his world-wide name, now handed down to us in the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company. Mr. Aynesley Cook and Mr. Celli are the only two surviving members of Rosa's original company. Among other artistes associated with Carl Rosa may be mentioned the late Joseph Maas, Santley, Blanche Cole, Torriani, Ella Russell, Georgina Burns, Julia Gaylord, Ben Davies, etc. Mr. Celli talks of going to America with two original works. Tempted some two years ago by his friends, Charles Morton and George Adney Payne, he deserted the stage and appeared on the boards of the music halls. It is pleasant to record that he brought his artistic and classical songs with him, and that he has acted rightly is to be found in the fact that audiences look for and appreciate his cul-

tured rendering of some of our fine old airs and ballads. While we have such artistes as Miss L. Clarke and Mr. Frank Celli figuring in the bills of the halls, it will be admitted that folk get their value for their money and hear the best, the very best talent that managers can place before their patrons.

* * *

The incident of the month is the appearance at the Aquarium of the Fakir Hadji Sueliman Ben Aissa. This man claims to be a lineal descendant of some ancient Arab priests of the Aissa, a Mahomedan sect. Part of the religious ceremony of this tribe is, to say the least, very gruesome. The Fakir coolly sticks pins, similar to those used by ladies for their bonnets, through his cheeks, his arms and his neck; next he passes a



THE ARAB FAKIR, HADJI SUELIWAN.

Photo. by]

[R. W. Thomas, 41, Chesham St.

stiletto, about the thickness of an ordinary penholder, through his tongue; then he allows vipers, said to be venomous vipers from Morocco, to bite him: he playfully gouges out his eye with the point of a needle, and holds his arm over a flaming torch. We are assured that this is part of a religious ceremony, and we have no reason to doubt it. That the performance is a genuine one I will vouch, as I have closely witnessed and followed it. Now, the peculiarity of this is that all these things are done and no blood is shed. Sueliman claims that he has the power to suspend the flow of his blood: why should we doubt it because we cannot realise the power? It is on record that a certain colonel had the power of suspending the action of his heart, and appearing to all appearances dead; and further, that the said colonel did this once too often for his own comfort. Again, I have seen a man dislocate his neck at will—a wonderful performance. I have dwelt for some time in the East, and my profession has brought me into close contact with all classes of Orientals. This intercourse has impressed on me the fact, that instead of the Eastern being an “ignorant nigger,” as we Englishmen are sometimes too fond of calling him, he is a most intelligent and cultured man. Many of his habits and customs may not be to our taste, yet for all that, he still is as I state. We Westerns do not appreciate the close study and research the Eastern has made into the world of the occult sciences. Some day I shall write on that subject, but that is another story. To come back to our moutons, that is, Sueliman Ben Aissa: he, at the commencement of his exhibition, partakes of some mysterious powder, said to deaden pain; he then works himself up into a frenzy, and by so doing he claims to render himself absolutely insensible to pain. Those in search of the curious would do well to visit the Aquarium. While there they might visit the Russian Waxwork Exhibition. I may add that so realistic



MR. SEYMOUR HICKS.

are some of the subjects that the following meets your eye before entering: “Notice and Caution—The Chamber of Horrors and Tortures of the Spanish Inquisition, and the Anatomical Museum are horrible sights and not suitable for ladies or gentlemen of sensitive temperaments.” Undoubtedly Mr. Ritchie, the genial manager at the Aquarium, leaves no stone unturned to find startling and novel attractions for his patrons.

* * *

We have heard a great deal for and against that combination, the actor-manager, but little has been said about the actor-author, or author-actor. One of the latest additions to this rank is Mr. Seymour Hicks. Mr. Hicks has already given us some pieces worthy of more than passing notice. Many will remember “The Young Sub-



MASTER CYRIL TYLER.



MESSRS. NORCROSS, HAST, FORINGTON AND SEXTON.

altern" at the Court Theatre and have admired it, but few were aware that the author and the young actor playing the part of McPhail in "Walker, London," were one and the same person. Mr. Hicks is rapidly making his name, not only on the boards, by his conscientious and careful acting, but also in the field of authorship.

The Promenade Concerts have been doing good business during the off-season. The very best talent has been provided, and the public have liberally responded.

Master Cyril Tyler, who is delighting the thronged audiences nightly, is alone worth hearing. Here is a mere lad, born some thirteen years ago in Naples, singing with as exquisite skill and taste as one would expect from a prima donna. He has, ever since he was three years old, shown most extraordinary musical talent. True, his father, Signor Taglieri, and his mother are both accomplished vocalists, and no doubt it is a clear case of heredity in Master Cyril. The lad is no prodigy; he is a genuine artiste, and has had a most careful training. His rendering of such pieces as Gounod's "Ave Maria," or "Angels ever bright and fair," or "Home, Sweet Home," being revelations. The

American press have raved over him, and justly so. The lad has taken part in some one hundred and twenty concerts throughout America and Canada, and not only has he not failed to appear once, but he has on every occasion electrified his audience. In New York Commodore Gerry and Mayor Grant had a battle over him: Mayor Grant wanted him to sing in New York; Commodore Gerry, who is the father of the Gerry Law, prohibiting children performing in public, protested, and ultimately the ladies had to intervene, and the mayor carried the day. Master Tyler purposes going on a provincial tour next month, and I would strongly advise all my country readers to go and hear him when they have the opportunity.

* * *

Another great attraction at these



Photo. by]

J. W. STOCKS.

[R. W. Thomas, 41, Cheapside.

concerts are "The Meister Glee Singers." They have been organised now some four years, and count but four members in their party, Messrs. Sexton, Hast, Forington and Norcross. They have sung in all the principal towns of the United Kingdom and have appeared before her Majesty the Queen and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. Her Majesty personally congratulated them and expressed her pleasure at having heard them. They have an enormous and quite unique collection of manuscript glees. Australia is negotiating for them, India wants them, and America insists on their going there. The highly artistic manner in which they render their glees and part songs has to be heard to be appreciated. Their appearances at these Promenade Concerts have been hailed with delight, and have always called forth rapturous and deserved encores. Among other well-known artistes appearing, I may mention Mesdames Valda and Belle Cole, and Mr. Eugene Oudin.

* * *

Some marvellous cycling feats have been recorded during the past few months on the patent wood track of the London and County Grounds at Herne Hill. On

August 30th, J. W. Stocks, of Hull, beat all previous records from 3 to 63 miles, completing the latter distance in 2 hours 45 minutes and 10 seconds; the previous record being 2 hours, 49 minutes, 35½ seconds. Mr. Stocks rode a Humber safety fitted with pneumatic tires, and showed no signs of great exertion after the completion of his remarkable performance.

Not content with this achievement, Mr. Stocks, with Mr. G. E. Osmond, started at the same grounds, mounted on a Whitworth tandem bicycle, on September 1st to break further records. Getting to work quietly, they settled down to business in the second mile, and from this distance till they dismounted at 27 miles they swept away all previous records, covering the 27 miles in 62 minutes, 4½ seconds, beating the previous world's record of 70 minutes, 21½ seconds by 8 minutes, 16½ seconds. In the first 60 minutes they covered 26 miles, 156 yards—a truly extraordinary performance. These remarkable times go to show that the Herne Hill Ground is the fastest track hitherto laid down for cyclists, and, wonderful as the foregoing racing is, we quite anticipate further reductions of records before long.

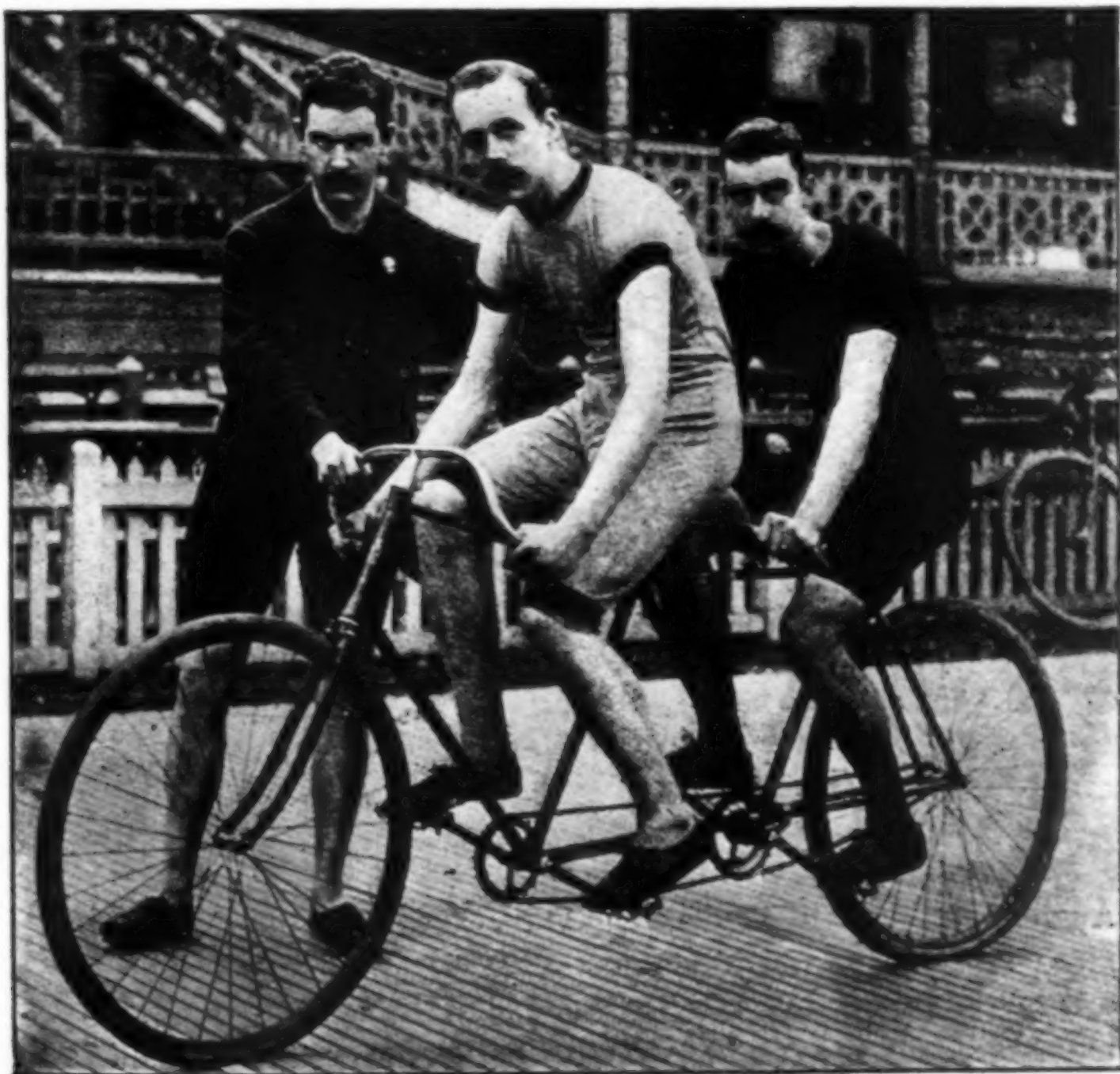


Photo. by]

G. E. OSMOND AND J. W. STOCKS.

[R. W. Thomas, 41 Cheapside.

❖ Puzzledom ❖

64. Numerical Enigma.—My whole is a plant of 7 letters.

My 1, 2 is a preposition.

My 4, 5, 3 is a sort of carriage.

My 3, 2, 7 is to wear.

My 6, 2, 3 is a horse.

65. A Charade.—At evening by my whole you'll think
Of days gone by, and never reckon
That by my second my first is made,
And by my first my second.

66. Conundrums.—Name me and you destroy me.

67. Why is hot toast like a caterpillar?

68. When does love become a pitched battle?

69. How would you eat a door?

70. Why are feet like tales of old?

Five Prizes of Three-Volume Novels, cloth bound, will be awarded to the First Five Competitors sending in correct or most correct answers by 20th October. Competitions should be addressed "October Puzzles," THE LUDGATE MONTHLY, 53, Fleet Street, London. Post cards only, please.

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER PUZZLES.

57. Ox.

58. (1) *Tournament.* (4) *Starlight.*

(2) *Melodrama.* (5) *Novelties.*

(3) *Unrighteousness.* (6) *Patience.*

59. *A pack of cards.*

60. *When it is ground.*

61. *Because the train runs over sleepers.*

62. *Because it goes from mouth to mouth.*

63. *When it is felt.*

The following are the names and addresses of the five winners in Puzzledom in our August Number, to whom the Three-Volume Novels have been sent:—A. Barrass, 52, Priory Hill, West Hampstead; G. W. Cluderay, 57, Reform Street, Hull; Miss Grace Henderson, Cromlet Bank, Old Meldrum, N.B.; A. Smith, Craggan, Ballater, Aberdeen; W. Vaughan, 12, South Street, Camberwell.